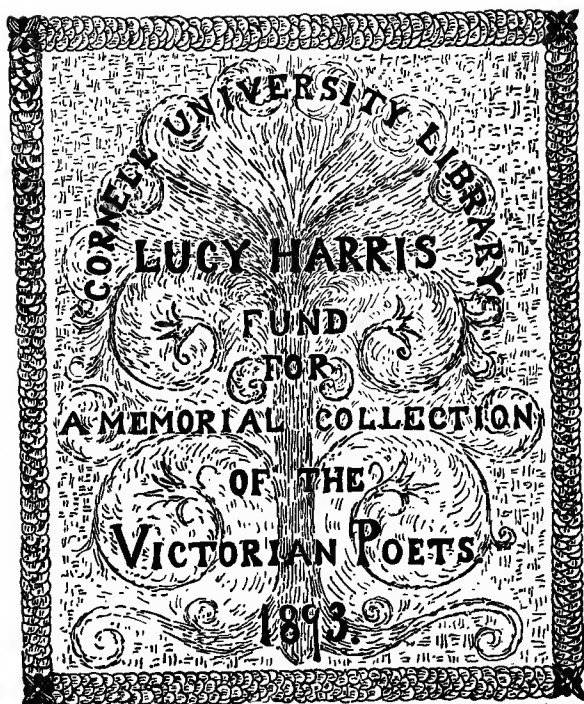


*OLD YEAR LEAVES*

*MACKENZIE BELL*





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OLD YEAR LEAVES.

By H. T. MACKENZIE BELL.

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## Verses of Varied Life.

"The most noticeable feature of Mr. Mackenzie Bell's work is descriptive of external nature in remote and unfamiliar places; he has obviously travelled extensively. His verses bear witness to considerable powers of observation, and some capacity for original thought. The scenes described are chiefly Spanish, but sometimes they are Italian, and occasionally even African."—*Academy*, Nov. 25, 1882.

"There are some pretty lines and stanzas; perhaps the worthiest poem is 'Heart-Echoes.' Our old friend, 'Waiting for the Dentist,' appears in an extended form."—*Graphic*, Dec. 15, 1882.

"'Waiting for the Dentist' is humorous."—*Morning Post*, Dec. 7, 1882.

"Many of the poems have been written during travels in Spain and elsewhere; and Mr. Mackenzie Bell sings agreeably of the changes that have overtaken places once famous in history."—*Bibliographer*, Dec. 1882.

"In the interval between his first and second books, Mr. Mackenzie Bell has assuredly made much progress with his art. 'Verses of Varied Life' bears evidence of much quiet and obtrusive thought on many themes. If he had appeared just at that juncture at which Mrs. Hemans was taking hold of popular sympathies, he would have stood an excellent chance of establishing his name."—*Liverpool Mercury*, Nov. 27, 1882.

---

## The Keeping of the Vow,

AND OTHER VERSES.

"The principal piece, which lends its title to this volume, relates to the well-known story of Robert Bruce sending his heart to the Holy Land. The episode is narrated with much fire and rough vigour. There are also a number of highly patriotic poems on stirring events in history, and, besides these, there are some graceful fancies expressed in very felicitous language. Mr. Mackenzie Bell has a fluent style, and writes with some imaginative fire. We congratulate Mr. Bell on having produced a volume of verse which certainly deserves to find readers, and which holds out promise of still better things to come."—*Australian and New Zealand Gazette*, April 7, 1879.

"The principal piece, whence this volume of verse takes its title, relates to the well-known bequest by King Robert Bruce of his heart to Sir James Douglas, to carry it to the Holy Land. The episode is managed with some skill, and told in verses of not a little vigour and picturesqueness. . . . The Lyrics entitled 'The Late Autumn is Dying' and 'The Warblers' Mission' are sweetly expressed and perfectly poetical fancies."—*Brief*, April 10, 1879.

---

IN SPRING.

## A FORGOTTEN GENIUS:

CHARLES WHITEHEAD. A CRITICAL MONOGRAPH.

---

ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.

# OLD YEAR LEAVES.

BEING

Old Verses Reprinted.

*every Thomas* BY  
H. T. MACKENZIE BELL.

LONDON:

ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1883.

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E.V. E

A. 298339



33, CARLTON ROAD,  
PUTNEY, S.W.

7<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1899.

Dear Sir,

Warm thanks for your letter of  
the 15<sup>th</sup> Sept. Appreciation  
such as yours is generally welcome.  
I am glad you like "Ideal  
Vanning".

~~He~~ Yes; Old Fead Leaves  
is out-of-print, and, if  
not troubling you too much,  
self

~~I should be glad~~ kindly let  
me know how you obtained  
your copy. I am aware that many  
copies are to be had.  
This note is autograph.

Republishing obligation is  
anticipation of your reply

sincerely yls

Maximilian Bell

*The leaves which in the autumn of the years  
Fall auburn-tinted from their parent trees,  
Swept from dismembered boughs by ruthless breeze,  
Through Winter's weary reign of want and fears  
Will lie in drifts; and when the snowdrop cheers—  
Frail firstling of the flowers—they still are there,  
There still, although the balmy southern air  
And budding boughs proclaim that Spring appears.*

*So lost hopes severed by the stress of life  
Unburied lie before our wistful eyes,  
Though none but we regard their fell decay;  
And ever amid the stir of worldly strife  
Fresh aims and fuller purposes arise  
Between the faded hopes of yesterday.*



## PREFACE.

---

THE present generation of young poets seems to have taken very earnestly to heart the observation of a very old and honoured poet, that at the feet of the greater singers there is always room for the humbler ones who are content to echo their voices without aspiring to rival their compass. Surely never since the days of the celebrated Mr. Merry, who founded the august Academy of Della Crusca, has there been so numerous a race of minor poets as at present, and he would indeed be a skilful

statistician who could compute the sum of money spent in producing what is called minor poetry during the last twenty-five years. The future historian of English poetical literature has a pregnant and assuredly an amusing theme in store for him in recording the doings of this minor poetic fraternity. Beginning perhaps with the seventeenth century, when every gallant gentleman who wore a sword sang the praises of his "fayre," he will come down to the eighteenth century, when every fine gentleman, in a powdered periwig and gold-laced coat, lisped in numbers of "Phyllis" and "Phœbus" and "conscious swains;" and from the earliest poetasters of Benjamin Stillingfleet's order of Blue-Stockings, down to the veriest butterflies that flourished in

the dalliance of the Cockney muse, he will find food for amusing comment, if not for instructive record. It was perhaps a cruel thing of Gifford to burn up, in his "Baviad and Mæviad," the fond family of small poets that impeded their little wings in his time, and perhaps it was in pursuance of a just revenge that Leigh Hunt in his "Feast of the Poets" burnt up the bats of small critics; but most persons of sober judgment will agree that in this world folly is immortal, and whether it takes the form of minor poetry or minor criticism, is perhaps not very important after all; and no succession of "Baviad and Mæviads" or "Feasts of the Poets" or "Sessions of the Poets" is likely to exterminate either the races of poetasters or of criticasters.

The historian of minor poetry who undertakes to traverse the forgotten verse of the Victorian era will assuredly have a prodigious task before him. Who shall even count the volumes of minor verse that have been published during the past twenty years? or yet the number of minor poets who did not exist as such a decade ago? It is said that the cellars of one well-known publishing house are literally walled (perhaps paved) with the unsold copies of the "effusions" of already forgotten living poets, and that each shelf of the literary mausoleum is duly labelled and ticketed in some symbolical fashion—*Sacred to the Memory of a Minor Bard*. Relating to this fact, I well remember an infinitesimal poet who was so straitened to obtain one of the



first necessities of his calling—rhyme—that he was obliged to “pave” his weary way to a grave. He might have utilized the unsold copies of the first and only edition of his poems for that purpose. It requires little effort of the imagination to picture the long-suffering historian at the British Museum. The preparatory labour he must undergo in determining the myriad volumes he has to ask for; the arduous work involved in writing so many book-tickets; the appalled and affrighted air of the unfortunate officials as they plaintively represent to him that their hand-carts are quite unequal to the task he would impose on them, and then that he would require a whole section of the Reading Room to himself in order to accommodate the literary

loads he demands! To the smaller bard, therefore, no hope is left of immortality—nay, such a remark needs qualification; there still remains the immortality conferred by a line in the British Museum Catalogue, and by a forgotten and concealed place on the British Museum shelves.

But despite this metaphorical wet blanket of well-nigh inevitable oblivion, of minor poets there is no lack, and the varieties of the species are infinite. There is, first, the minor poet who is the liegeman of the greater poet, and who out-herods his particular Herod in every excess of sentiment or of manner that distinguishes, or perhaps disfigures his prototype. Thirty years ago he must have been a follower of Mr. Tennyson, and then he was sweet and gentle down to the very

lowest depths of sweetness, or perchance of silliness. Ten years ago he must have imagined himself to be a follower of Mr Swinburne, and then he revelled in the rhapsodies of rhythm, and—on paper at least—in the raptures and roses of vice. The neophyte usually so far resembled his prototype as to be an amiable and excellent gentleman in his exemplary private life, but in poetry he was a terrible creature, who bit when he kissed, and loved hate more than he loved love, and death more than life; who laughed at such simple weaknesses as piety and religion, and held all kings and queens to be tyrants, and all deities to be demons. The lesser poet of this by no means extinct species was a portentous personage indeed, whose conception

of his own importance was only commensurate with the world's indifference to his existence.

Then there is the minor poet who supposes that he is a great poet : that he has only to throw down his gage, and the Universe must perforce come to a general pause as the result of his challenge. The airs this species of poetaster gives himself are usually too ludicrous to be irritating ; and what becomes of him when he finds that the world is so stubborn as not to fall beneath his powers none can rightly say. Perhaps he quietly buttons up his breeches-pocket and settles down into a Common Councillor ; perhaps, as Disraeli hints, he avenges his wrongs on his race by the illogical expedient of becoming a critic himself, and in that capacity scourging

the similar pretensions of the ambitious bards who come after him.

Then there is the minor poet who talks about his personal loves, and dreams, and aspirations ; who takes all men into his confidence with a noble ingenuousness, and unlocks for the vulgar gaze the dearest secrets of his soul. How far he is rewarded for wearing his heart on his sleeve one can hardly be sure when one notes the playful banter of those cynical scribes who persistently shout on the house-tops what might not always be conveniently whispered in the closet, and who fail entirely to respect the well-meant but ill-judged pathos of the lesser writer.

But in truth there is one class of minor poet which, in my judgment, has a right to

exist, if only because it is a modest class, and because, being modest, it is true to its name, —I mean the minor poet who sings the songs of minor life, leaving the “larger utterance” to higher voices; who lives on the lowly plains of every-day experience and does not pretend either to the sweep of vision or compass of voice of those who dwell on the heights. Such a minor poet was Hartley Coleridge, among the writers of verse of the generations just past; such, too, were Eliza Cook and J. E. Carpenter; and of the same class we have still not a few. Need I say that for myself I claim no such distinction, for distinction it is rightly to know the functions of the minor poet, and modestly to practise them? One thing I trust I can claim, and one only—namely, that I

have neither fallen into the error of imagining that I am myself an individual voice nor of supposing that I can lay claim to be an echo of any voice that is individual. I am old-fashioned enough to believe that the simple loves, and hopes, and aims, the simple faith and creed that were enough for our fathers in that simple England which seems to have gone by for ever, are still surviving among us, and that with all our modern artificiality in letters as well as life, there are in more than one corner of the country simple people who will be glad to have these things written about in a simple way. To such an old-fashioned audience I now once more address myself,—modestly, I know, hopefully, I believe, reasonably, I trust.

H. T. MACKENZIE BELL,

*London, October, 1883.*





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# MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.





## MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

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### THE RIVER OF THOUGHT.

THE strong River of Thought has an aye-  
changeable course,  
Yet for ever it springs from the same changeless  
source  
Where God-given Truth in its grandeur doth  
reign,  
The regal physician of Man's mental pain.

Sometimes in high joyance it glideth along  
With glamour of music and gladness of song :—  
While borne on its bosom gay pleasure-boats sail,  
Rejoicing a while in the light laughing gale.

Sometimes like the stream which has sunk under  
ground,  
Yet still keeps its course mid the darkness profound,  
Unknown and alone it must hold on its way,  
Till emerging at length in the full light of day.

Sometimes like the mountain's fierce torrent it  
flows,  
And all that can hinder its progress o'erthrows ;—  
Possessing the power of immutable right,  
And strong in the strength of invincible might.

Crass Ignorance surely succumbs to its sway,  
As boldly it takes its all-conquering way,—  
While keen-sighted Knowledge appears in its train,  
The sweetener of pleasure, the soother of pain.

Unceasingly hated by many, yet some  
Unceasingly love it, though oft they are dumb.  
Yet whatever betides, and wherever it flows,  
'Tis the noble who love it, the weak who oppose

Great River of Thought ! our strange world doth  
not know

The evil you check, and the good you bestow :—  
May Time teach the lesson, 'twill then comprehend  
How well and how often you prove its true friend.

## A RALLYING SONG.

DOUBTING, trusting, hoping, fearing,  
Are we in this world of wrong—  
Yet whilst o'er Life's ocean steering,  
Let this be our rallying song—  
Aye, in sadness  
And in gladness,  
Nobly act, in God's strength strong.

When oppressed by deep soul-sorrow,  
Joy departing like a dream,  
Let us still some brightness borrow  
From this heart-sustaining theme—  
Aye, in sadness  
As in gladness,  
Nobly act, whate'er may *seem*.

When to stain our honour tempted  
Some ignoble end to buy,  
From such cowardice exempted  
Let us resolutely cry—  
Evil sow not,  
That it grow not,  
Nobly act, for God is nigh.

For, befall what may, with Conscience  
Satisfied shall we be blest ;  
So mid all Life's strange mutations  
Still this motto must be best—  
Aye, in sadness  
And in gladness,  
Nobly act, and *trust* the rest.

## WHISPERING WINDS.

WHISPERING winds strange musings carry  
To our hearts as they sweep by :—  
Thoughts that often thrilling tarry  
Though the winds may wailing die.

To the sailor, watchful pacing  
On the deck of ship at sea,  
Bring they dreams of danger facing,  
Mid the tempest's mockery.

To the exile, hoping, fearing,  
Wandering on an alien strand,  
Bring they memories endearing  
Of his much-loved Father-land.

To the weary heavy-hearted  
Often bring they thoughts of peace,  
Of the peace where, pain departed,  
Woe and weariness shall cease.

Sometimes bring they only sorrow  
To the stricken in their train,  
Imaging a dread to-morrow  
Which will but augment their pain.

Bring they unto some new pleasure  
And each trace of care destroy,  
While to others yield a measure  
Of distress that mars their joy.

Yet these forms of varied feeling  
In this feature all agree,  
That o'er every soul is stealing  
Thought of an Eternity.

## HELPFULNESS.

BEHOLD a fine tree growing in a field,  
Apart from any other, and alone,  
With nothing to preserve it or to shield  
It from the wind, yet it is ever known  
To thrive as well as trees whose lot is thrown  
In sheltered woods, saved from the wintry blast.  
And first from it in spring is heard the tone  
Of singing birds ; for, while its branches last,  
It is a blessing where its lonely lot is cast.

How well if often thus with man it were,  
For surely cheering others on their way  
Would wondrously relieve our ceaseless care,  
And dissipate the gloom of Life's drear day,  
By teaching us that Love will truly pay  
An hundredfold again what we bestow  
Upon our brother toilers ; none can say  
The blessings that we reap when thus we show  
O r sympathy for men by sharing in their woe.



## THE SOURCE OF SONG.

WHAT maketh the true poet sing ?

Is it sense of deep injuries thrown  
On the weak by the strong, which sting  
His heart, till to song he is prone ?

Is it sight of some beautiful lake

All aflame with the dying sun's rays,—  
O'er whose breast the acacias shake  
Soft tresses of feathery sprays ?

Is it thought of some beautiful form

That fays well might deign to assume ;  
Displaying with ardour full warm,  
How noble is youth's early bloom ?

Is it thought of his dear mother-land,—

The deep longing that she be supreme :  
Aspiration as loyal as grand,  
Which to sons should be more than a dream ?

Is it pleasure in physical health—  
The supreme unacquirable dower,  
Far greater in blessing than wealth,  
And almost as mighty in power?

Is it simple desire to excel?  
Or ambition that's highest and best,  
Which longs among mankind to dwell,  
To show by true life what is blest?

With such things the poet must strive,  
And sometimes they impel him to sing,  
Till in fortunate hour they may drive  
Him for aid to re-touch his lute's string.

But the primary cause which impels,—  
More resistless than aught of these things,—  
Is this : that within him there dwells  
A soul which but lives when he sings.

## A STORM SONG.

THE surges in anger are beating  
On the rocks and the shingle-strewn shore,  
And though with a hiss aye retreating,  
They come in fierce fury once more.

Most sternly the billows are breaking  
In wreaths white with purest of spray,—  
Still further their great wrath awaking,  
As forward they dash on their way.

The wild wailing wind that is blowing,  
The dreariness far out to sea,  
The feelings that come without knowing  
In truth what their nature may be.

All these, and much more now oppress me  
As musing I gaze on the strand :—  
Yet though in some sense it distress me,  
How noble a storm is,—how grand !

The ships in the bay are so swaying,  
Their cables can scarce bear the strain :—  
Their beams with the water are playing  
While sailing is utterly vain

As the gale is against them completely ;  
The rain how it ceaselessly falls,  
Clouds scud o'er the sky, ah how fleetly !  
And harsh are the sea-birds' shrill calls.

\* \* \* \* \*

The storm is now spent and departed  
And yet its effects still remain,—  
Two mothers are made broken-hearted,  
Their boys will not greet them again.

How wondrous it is that Creation  
Is aye in perpetual strife,  
And shows not, for man's emulation,  
How calmness should regulate life !

Can it be that when Man in his madness  
To Evil at first became thrall,  
All Nature was forced with sore sadness  
To join his unspeakable fall ?

## A SONG FOR POLAND IN 1878.

AH, how cruel the thraldom and bitter the bonds  
Of our wretched and down-trodden nation !  
Not a throb of our hearts but in anguish responds  
To the sight of such dire desolation :  
And in scarce-spoken words we are heard to  
declare  
Woe hath made us wellnigh broken-hearted,  
Dark and dreary the prospect ; dear Poland,  
despair,  
Since thy liberty now hath departed.

Other peoples get freedom, while we in the dust  
Alone and forsaken are lying ;  
Ever lower and lower continually thrust,  
Men's love of their country fast dying.  
While the Government check with malicious  
intent  
Any change for our good which is started.  
Dark and dreary the prospect ; let Poland lament,  
Since her liberty's light hath departed !

No! Revenge on the tyrants who work us such  
ill

Mid their bland hypocritical prating :<sup>1</sup>—

And arouse ye, undaunted, remembering that still

Retribution is certainly waiting.

Let our nation awake which now slumbering lies !

Not a moment be longer down-hearted !

For rejoicing may come if proud Poland arise,

And her freedom return which departed.

<sup>1</sup> The writer had in his mind when writing these lines the many protestations of the Russians in favour of Freedom on commencing the war with Turkey.

## WHAT ALL MAY DO.

OUR past life must perish,  
Our future arise,  
And oft what we cherish  
Most speedily dies :—  
There are griefs for whose changing  
We helplessly long,  
Though we feel our arranging  
Is hopelessly wrong :—  
But if we live rightly,  
We have in our power  
To gather up brightly,  
From each fading hour,  
A thought-woven treasure  
Of justly-earned joy,  
Whose bountiful measure  
No grief can destroy.



## WAITING FOR THE DENTIST.<sup>1</sup>

THOUGH many dismal years I've been  
To dull old Care apprenticed,  
The worst of the small woes I've seen  
Is—waiting for the dentist !

How dreary is the cheerless room  
In which you bide his pleasure,  
The very chairs seemed steeped in gloom,  
And sorrow without measure.

As if so wild mute-molar grief,  
So uncontrolled its swelling,—  
That its fierce tide had sought relief  
By deluging the dwelling.

<sup>1</sup> As lines have recently been added, this piece is here re-printed.

What though of literature a store  
Is lying on the table,  
You only think the books a bore ;  
To read you are unable.

What from the window, though, perchance,  
You see forms full of graces,  
They merely make you look askance,  
And think how sore your face is.

On many chairs and sofas, too,  
More martyrs round you languish,  
You glance at them, they glance at you,  
And give a groan of anguish.

You deem it hard, their turn arrives  
Before you in rotation,  
Or they wax wroth that your's deprives  
Their case of consolation.

You muse upon the ruthless wretch  
Which buys a tooth's departing—

Or how the stopping-pangs to quench,  
In which you may be starting ;

Or haply on these ivory chips  
Harsh Nature may deny you,—  
But which the ' golden key ' equips  
Man's genius to supply you.

No words your mood of mind express,  
'Tis a state devoid of quiet,—  
In which pain, pleasure, and distress  
Mingle in hopeless riot.

Yes, though much sorrow one must know,  
While to old Care apprenticed,  
The greatest unheroic woe  
Is—waiting for the dentist.

REWARD OF PARLIAMENTARY  
DOCILITY.

A BROTHER TO A SISTER.

MY DEAR —

As words though sincere,  
Are at best but 'small beer,'

My party (in office) have made me a peer :  
A step which the press I do hope won't deem queer,  
Nor question its justice, nor slightly sneer,  
(What I've done to deserve it is not very clear,  
Save doing as bid, when divisions were near—  
Thus causing our Whip's drooping spirits to cheer,)  
But be that as it may, I subscribe myself here  
John Anthony SNOBBINS,

(*now*) LORD ABINMERE.

## SONNETS ON THE POWER OF THOUGHT.

IN CONVERSE.

WHO can predict what power for distant days  
Toward good or ill lies centred in a Thought  
Which flashing through the mind unmeant,  
    unsought,  
Is uttered suddenly in careless phrase?  
Ill that no future good can stingless make  
In the effects wrought by its blighting force ;—  
Great good that floweth from the all-good Source,  
The Fount from which all purity we take.  
Sometimes thought's mighty aims in secret lurk  
And labour silently, their aim concealed,  
Until the crisis comes ; sometimes revealed  
They zealously pursue their varied work.  
Reflecting wisely thus may we be taught  
Not rashly to express each flippant thought.

## IN WRITING.

IF so it be with speech, how much the more  
With written language! Speech perforce decays,  
'Neath Time's destroying touch. Ere many days  
Gone is mayhap the fruit which wise words bore :  
That written doth remain,—its import not  
Dependent on frail Memory's brittle thread  
To keep it safe, or number with the dead  
At her capricious will. None can say what  
Momentous destiny may be assigned  
To some brief trivial letter. Authors too  
Who lightly pen, to please the public view,  
Works strenuous and yet stained with vice, will  
find  
A day of certain retribution come  
When all their loud excuses will be dumb.

## IN ART.

THE power of Thought in art! Who has not  
found  
And marked its subtle influence? We see  
Its magic in a picture wondrously,  
Whose canvas by its presence made renowned  
Bears witness to the fact. When we behold  
A stately building, and perceive the skill  
Which shapes each column at the sculptor's will  
Till it attains at length th' exquisite mould  
That he has long desired. When we are thrilled  
By some soft cadence rippling on the ear  
Of sweetest music,—as though far and near  
With a celestial choir the air were filled :—  
Then, and then always, may we truly find  
What power of thought lies in the human mind!

## IN PROVERBS, &C.

THE power of Thought in Proverbs !—oftentimes  
We find its glittering essence centred there,  
All crystallized, as if indeed it were  
A bright and flawless diamond.—Silly Rhymes  
Which oft we hear repeated are not dross  
Entirely,—here and there rare pearls of thought  
Appear upon their surface, genius-wrought ;  
Had they not been, we must have borne a loss.  
O mighty power of Thought, it may not be  
Within the sphere of any man to find  
Thought undiscovered by a brother-mind,  
Though deep and boundless is thy shoreless sea :—  
And yet thy potent pathway is the groove  
In which, by thee propelled, the change-girt world  
doth move.



IN MEMORY

OF

*The gallant men who fell fighting at Isandhlwana,  
South Africa, in a surprise by the Zulus,  
23d January 1879.*

STEADFAST they stood,—nor feared to face the  
foe

Though twenty-fold outnumbered,—calm, alone  
They bore the brunt of battle on them thrown,  
And bravely strove against the ignoble blow :  
Yet doubtless mid the din of deadly strife  
Came softened thoughts of home and loved ones  
dear :

And many a prayer was prayed in faith sincere  
That they might meet anew in deathless life.  
*We* mourn their loss (a wound Time scarce can  
heal)—

Yet we are proud such courage doth remain  
Among us. May we soon efface the stain  
From England's flag,—while more and more we  
feel

A sense of joy, which in our hearts will stay,  
That Britain still can boast these 'heroes of to-day.'

*Feb. 22d, 1879.*

DECEMBER DAISIES AND DECEMBER  
DAYS.

*December 3d, 1881.*

AH, how the sight of fair untimely flowers  
Awakes a subtle sentiment, and fills  
The soul with quiet pleasure. Something thrills  
Our being to the core and softly showers  
Strange yearning thought upon us. When the  
close

Of a December day is stirless, mild  
As is this twilight hour, we are beguiled  
By its seductive softness: and there grows  
(As one by one from out the placid sky  
The tranquil stars appear), the half-formed doubt  
Whether the scene be real. For without  
A question kindly Auster cannot try  
To bring a greater boon. Joys that arise  
All unexpected we most keenly prize.

## VIOLET.

‘A TALE of sorrow’? Ay, I know,  
One fraught with sharp and sudden woe,  
A story of undoubted truth,  
Beclouding all my sunny youth ;  
And though with arbitrary sway  
Stern Time has turned my locks to grey,  
Though furrowed wrinkles on my brow  
Proclaim that I am agèd now,  
Though signs of trouble you may trace  
In the expression of my face,—  
Though trembling is my bloodless hand,  
And scarcely under due command,  
Though devious is my tottering tread,  
Though bent with weight of years my head ;  
Though my whole look, my gait, my air,  
Show sad though common signs of care,  
Yet fadeless, unforgotten, clear,  
To mental sight its scenes appear.

Of sisters I had only one  
As playmate,—brothers I had none.  
A lovely rose-lipped child was she,  
Dear as my very life to me ;  
Now, almost mournful in their birth,  
Rise thoughts of these dead days of mirth ;  
I see her framing daisy-chains  
While I assist, and for my pains  
Receiving, as repayment meet,  
The chaplet from her when complete.  
And as o'er both the restless years  
Resistless rolled their hopes and fears,  
They only bound us by a bond  
More durable and just as fond.  
O happy he who thus hath known  
Such union ere his lot was thrown  
Amid the changes and the strife  
And heart-wounds of the world's strange life !  
Even dreams of such communion to the bruised  
and wearied soul,  
Are ever found the truest balm to make it  
strong and whole.

\* \* \* \* \*

Yes : years rolled on, with little change  
For us in Duty's daily range.

My sister—Violet her name,—  
In beauty grown, remained the same  
In character. Her guileless grace,  
Almost a proverb in the place,  
To those she loved exceeding fond,  
And gentle unto all beyond.

Ever for right most firm and strong,  
Aye valiantly rebuking wrong,  
And seeking in whatever mood  
To shun the ill and do the good.  
Her figure pleasing as her mien,  
Her summers numbering seventeen ;  
Her rippling hair of darkest hue,  
Her eyes not oft describèd blue,  
But some rare tint,—and pen can ne'er  
Portray the radiance glowing there.

There was a youth whom Violet thought  
Worthy her love, and he had caught  
A kindred flame of chaste desire ;  
A truer love could none require,  
Parents and friends were satisfied,  
And well they might be ; all descried

That union of such virtuous worth  
Would prove the happiest on earth.

Our lawn stretched to a deep broad stream :  
On summer eves 'twas like a dream  
To watch the gentle moonbeams play  
Across its wide and glittering way ;  
To trace the tremor of the trees  
Slow moving in the soft night breeze,  
And as on either side they bend  
Each towards the other as a friend  
Talking with comrade dear,—to think  
These trees, converse they, on this river's brink ?

On the stream's tide we kept a boat,  
Not often did it idly float  
In peace near to the summer shore ;  
For one alone could ply its oar  
With pleasure. In the sultry noon,  
With bees and birds and trees in tune,  
How sweet to glide in it, and screen  
'Neath willows from the scorching sheen ;  
Thus Violet full oft had been.

And so one day—the heat was great,  
And, we conjecture, to abate  
Its force, she to the water dipped  
To lave her hands,—in quickly slipped  
The boat's light oar ; that then she tried  
To reach it, bending on one side,—  
Till gone too far to stay, 'twould seem,  
She slid into the treacherous stream.

Too late an oarless boat was found,  
And near, a maiden, soul-less, drowned,  
In whose fair face and gloomless mien  
Death in his gentlest form was seen.  
One lover more o'erwhelmed with grief,  
Whose tears as yet brought no relief,  
Who, righteous and untouched by guile,  
Ne'er sought another maiden's smile ;  
A brother who through all his coming years  
Will strive to dry his brethren's bitter tears.

'A common story, this,' I hear one say,—  
'Not worth the telling.' Nay, stern critic, nay ;



Each man's heart-tragedy, if truly told,  
Will interest some, although to most 'tis cold  
And commonplace. No case of mental pain  
Which crushes not, but strengthens, can be vain.

## HEART ECHOES.

WHILE the sunlight's glory dying  
    Tints the pebbly sea-kissed strand,  
And the night-chilled breezes sighing,  
    See the shadows wrap the land—  
Faint, yet powerful, sad, yet tender,  
    Come fond thoughts of vanished years,  
Waking sweet soul-thrills that render  
    Joy that is akin to tears.  
Ah, how real are these dreams !  
And the past the present seems.

Visions of a gentle maiden  
    Beautiful and pure as fair,  
And of eves whose gales love-laden  
    Wanton with her auburn hair :

For 'twas when soft summer's beauty  
    Made the earth with gladness rife  
First I felt, as well as duty,  
    What deep joy might be in life :  
Ah, how real are these dreams !  
And the past the present seems.

Memories are swiftly thronging  
    Of that span of treasured past,  
When the joy to me belonging  
    Was, alas ! too bright to last :  
Still do I remember clearly  
    What I asked with trembling voice,  
And her words, ' I love you dearly,  
    And am proud to be your choice.'  
Ah, how real are these dreams !  
And the past the present seems.

We were ' wedded, happy-hearted,'  
    And our future path seemed bright,  
Who could tell we should be parted,  
    Love's glad sun obscured in night ?

Yet before another spring-tide  
    Shed abroad its myriad charms,  
Bitter blow ! my darling left me,—  
    Dying calmly in my arms.  
Ah, how real, fraught with woe,  
    Rise these dreams of long ago !

Still amid my sore dejection,  
    In its comfort ever new,  
Comes the soothing, sweet reflection,  
    To each other we were true.  
For some end God sendeth sorrow,  
    And when this at length is gained  
I shall meet my bride in Heaven  
    Happy, holy, and unstained.  
*There* no longer fraught with woe  
    Rise the dreams of long ago.

## THE POET'S POWERLESSNESS.

UNTO the poet's mental eye how clear  
Appears a scene he would in wise words weave  
Into the varied texture of his verse !  
A scene it is of beauty unsurpassed,—  
Of hoary mountains whose gigantic peaks  
Approach the sky,—of a fair wooded vale,—  
And of a rushing rivulet, whose sound  
Re-echoes in his ears. A simple theme  
Methinks to handle, yet at once he finds  
How hard it is to choose the magic words  
With which to make the spell he trusts will bind  
The senses of his readers. Ever thus  
He feels it in description,—also when  
Depicting subtle feelings of the soul,—  
Indeed in every subject meet for song :—  
And so he feels that words are at the best  
Most ineffective colours to paint well  
A theme Imagination-glorified.

## THE POET'S THOUGHTS.

THAT dotard soul I cannot comprehend,  
Nursing no hope that, after many years,  
His name should be preserved by other means  
Than by an entry in the parish-books—  
A man who harbours in his heart no hope  
To be remembered in the unborn days  
By some good deed accomplished, that should  
    leave  
A blessing and a benefit behind  
To such as follow after.

Therefore now

I make this sacred resolution strong :  
I shall redeem the time, and though the days  
Are evil, yet it shall be my delight  
To labour patiently : that when I reach  
My goal of pilgrimage it shall be seen  
That I at least have lived not all in vain.

Most men but live, as sacred Scripture saith,  
' They eat, they drink, are merry, and they die.'  
Few daily doings are of much account  
In fifty years ; then let my mind be set  
On themes more fit to fill the soul of man.

## THE OMNIPRESENCE OF POETRY.

THERE's poetry in everything,  
If poets could but find  
How best its subtle power to bring  
To breathe upon the mind.

It lurks in all of Nature's store,  
Alike on land and main,—  
Where far from shore the breakers roar,  
And on the quiet plain.

'Mid lofty mountains whose proud peaks  
Appear to pierce the sky,—  
In valleys where the farmer seeks  
His busy tasks to ply.

'Mid scenes where babbling brooklets haste,  
Engirt with flowery strand ;  
Where man's harsh turmoil makes a waste  
Of erst a beauteous land



In mighty cities never dumb  
    With sounds of human life,  
In villages where seldom come  
    Cares born of human strife.

'Mid friends and kindred everywhere,  
    In talks with those we love  
When happy intercourse we share ;—  
    In thoughts of things above.

Enwove with every feeling here,  
    Part of each joy and pain,  
And permeating love sincere  
    Which never can be vain.

For Poetry's white hands can mould,  
    From all of Earth, pure leaven ;—  
And who shall say it will not hold  
    A noble place in Heaven !

## FRAGMENT FOR MUSIC.

SOFTLY swaying  
Are the flowers,  
Scents betraying  
'Mid the showers :  
Gently moving  
Are the trees,  
Not reproving  
The rude breeze.

Stars shine quiet  
Though the storm's  
Cloudlets riot  
O'er their forms :  
Moonrays mildly  
Shed their light,  
Though still wildly  
Wails the night.

Mountains never  
    In their might  
Care if ever  
    Lost to sight :  
Plants must wither  
    And be lost  
When comes thither  
    Biting frost.

Lower creatures  
    Scarce complain,  
Nor their features  
    Change with pain ;  
Though Toil's burden  
    Ne'er is done,  
Though no guerdon  
    Can be won.

At each season  
    Man makes moan  
Though glad reason  
    Is his own ;—

Notwithstanding  
In his might  
Earth commanding,  
Wrong or right.

## AN EVENING LANDSCAPE.

THE sun has set, and shades of evening close,  
And all around there reigns profound repose ;  
And not a sound is heard, save when the breeze  
In fitful gusts comes rustling through the trees ;  
And with its facile force their branches sways,  
Like spectres moving in the moon's faint rays.

Ah, little change the face of nature knows,  
Compared with life's oft-changing joys and woes,  
And while poor, puny man departs as fast  
As smoke is scattered by the wintry blast ;  
Its aspect will continue as of yore,  
Till God decrees that Time shall be no more.

THE GUERDON OF TRIBULATION  
NOT INCURRED BY GUILT.

OH say not that the world is sad  
Without redeeming feature,  
Oh say not that the world is glad  
And holds no hopeless creature.

No life is ever filled with woe  
However great its sadness,  
No lot can be all joy, although  
Most glorious seems its gladness.

With endless grief Life is not fraught,  
Nor with all bliss and beauty,  
By varied influence we are taught  
How to fulfil our duty.

If happy be our lot assigned,  
Of sorrow slight our burden,  
Yet work on still with steadfast mind  
Assured shall be our guerdon :

But a crown more rich to those shall be  
From pain much less exempted,  
If conquering the same foes as we,  
Although more sorely tempted.

Thus every woe our souls within,  
Though stern its present sadness,  
If meekly borne, nor caused by sin,  
Augments our future gladness.

## BY-AND-BYE.

How oft our course in life is fair and gay,  
And full of happiness from day to day ;  
                    But by-and-bye  
Will bring some grief to cast its shadow on our  
            way.

And then our path proves drear and dark as night,  
For happiness, our sun, is lost to sight ;  
                    But by-and-bye  
Will bring a time when all the way again grows  
            bright.

Swiftly we travel through Earth's joy and woe,  
Though rough our path, even there the flowerets  
            grow ;  
                    And by-and-bye  
Will bring a Restful Life where nought of change  
            we know.



## THE TRUE TREASURE.

LIVING brings us bitter sorrow,  
Oft our hearts refuse submission,  
While we yearn for a to-morrow  
Which shall change our dark condition.

Love may bring us bitter sadness  
When we find our love can never  
More impart the sense of gladness  
Which we thought it would for ever.

Joy may bring us bitter trouble,  
Faith give place to Falsehood's anguish,  
Hope may prove an empty bubble  
When bereft of it we languish.

Worldly peace may bring us only  
More of pain and less of quiet,—  
And departing leave us lonely,  
Battling in the world's rude riot.

Faith in man may bring delusion,  
Oftentimes, when it has perished,  
We discover with confusion  
'Twas a phantom that we cherished.

Trust in God is truest treasure,  
For of change it holds no leaven,—  
If we live aright, its measure  
Makes us holy, worthy Heaven.

A MOTHER'S SOLILOQUY ON HER  
NEWLY-DEPARTED CHILD.

MY darling dead ! Is all the long endeavour  
For life-restoring vain ? These wistful eyes,  
So Truth-illumed and loving, will they never  
Check by a glance again my futile sighs ?

And shall I weep—although for him the gladness  
Of human life for ever now is o'er,  
And I am left with anguished sense of sadness,  
A sadness which on earth is lost no more ?

A cripple's lot were his, had he, remaining,  
Striven to take his part in earth's stern strife,  
Thus less of sinless happiness obtaining,  
While feeling all the woe of mundane life.

The Master, seeing this, hath gently made him  
Fitter among His ransomed ones to be,—  
And day by day more fully hath arrayed him  
In Christ's rich blood-bought robe of purity ;

So shortening the period of probation  
Which otherwise were necessary here,  
And raising him to an immortal station  
Where maimed and suffering ones no tauntings  
fear.

Then shall I cherish an abiding sorrow  
For him whom God in mercy takes away ?  
Nay, rather let me muse on that blest morrow  
Which joins our severed souls in bliss for aye.

## A MATIN MELODY.

SWEET-VOICED songsters softly singing,  
Tell a new day is begun,  
Its appointed portion bringing  
Of fresh duty to be done.

Last day's deeds have gone for ever,—  
Seems it not most passing strange  
Their results remain, and never  
Can be touched by time-wrought change.<sup>1</sup>

Like a child who, pebble throwing  
From a streamlet's sedgy marge,  
May not mark the ripples growing  
Though they one by one enlarge.

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to *reverse* the results of one day's deeds by the action of another, but the results of one day, as far as their effect on subsequent ones is concerned, are immutable.

So with influence increasing,  
Widening o'er Life's mystic sea,  
Are effects of actions,—ceasing  
Only with eternity.

Many yesterday, unthinking,  
Chose the path which leads to doom,—  
While a few with souls unshrinking  
Sought the road which cleaves earth's gloom.

Thus I muse with rapt devotion  
Whilst the moments speed away,  
Till I feel with meet emotion  
All the issues of *to-day*.

## LORD, TEACH US HOW TO PRAY.

LUKE XI. 1.

A VAST enigma is our life  
Without Thy guiding ray ;  
But Thou, who willed, canst calm its strife,  
By teaching us to pray.

Prayer ! true solution of the fears  
And doubts along our way ;  
Whose influence, coming, sweetly cheers,—  
What bliss it is to pray !

So when its mysteries distress,  
And gloom enshrouds Life's day,  
We plead that Thou wouldst make them less,  
By teaching us to pray.

Dark is the path of weary woe,  
    Whilst in Earth's night we dwell,  
Yet prayer will prove a sun to show  
    That still Thou leadest well.



## ASPIRATIONS.

O FOR the feelings which abide  
    Within the poet's mind,  
That softly through his bosom glide  
    And leave strange joy behind !

O for a little of the power  
    Strong, piercing, pure and clear,  
Which is his ever-potent dower,  
    To reach the cold world's ear !

O for a little of the fruit  
    Untinged with earthly leaven,  
Not fame alone, nor vain repute,  
    But something caught from Heaven.

Assurance that one's strain has cheered  
Even though it be but one,  
And shed on the dark path he feared  
A little glimpse of sun.

EDGAR VANNING:

A SKETCH.



# EDGAR VANNING:

## A SKETCH.



### PERSONS.

EDGAR VANNING.—*A young man near the close of a successful University career.*

ALETHEA STANTON.—*His betrothed.*

### SCENE I.

*Edgar's college rooms. EDGAR seated at a table, holding in his hand an open letter, which informs him that he has succeeded in obtaining a much-coveted University honour.*

#### EDGAR.

TRULY a grand—a noble thing is life,  
And with what joy a young man's life is fraught,  
When, with a mind matured, a happy heart,  
And resolution firm, he gazes forth  
Upon the boundless world! He knows its snares,

Its pitfalls, and its quicksands ; yet to him  
'Tis given to avoid them. He is not  
A foolish simple boy fired with strange thoughts  
Of schemes impracticable, which should cure  
The ills that are the bane of social life  
In these our modern days.

Yet though he feels  
Not youth's enthusiasm, nor its sense—  
So all-absorbing that success is sure :  
Though conscious of his failures and his faults,  
Though knowing well his many weaknesses,—  
Yet hath he self-respect, and knoweth too  
His capabilities ;—and hopes, ay, longs  
By steadfast effort to effect some good,  
Which shall, however small, still serve to show  
That all his life hath not been barrenness.  
But these are stern thoughts—let them pass—  
there flows

The fresh untrammelled blood of buoyant life  
Full joyous through my veins ; my mind is clear,  
My intellect is cultured, and I hope  
My heart is happy. I have lately said  
That life to such is gladness, let me not  
Belie so recent words.

Ay, when I think  
Of that great love which nestles in my soul,  
Like a fair darling child of three years old  
On her fond father's breast :—when it is true  
That this love hath its guerdon, I should be  
For ever gladsome : I remember well  
The retinue of unreturning years  
And many a day and hour which made them up,  
Since she, who is my heart's desire, and I  
Had our first meeting. We were children both—  
Our parents were firm friends, and we were thrown  
Often together : and as Dante loved  
His Beatrice, so I Alethea,—  
Save that his Beatrice was proudly cold,  
While my Alethea was meek and kind ;—  
And that as children we ne'er *thought* of love,  
Although we loved so young we cannot tell  
When love at first began. What subtle joy  
It is to think that we are one in heart,  
Together soon to tread Life's hardened ways !  
What peace to me to think—a brief time past—  
There comes to me a help-meet truly meet,  
No speaker of sham sentiment, or words  
Of mawkish weary platitudes, but one

Who strengthens me to do the right, who strives  
To urge me on to goodly deeds and great.  
O how refreshing oft it is to leave  
My studies stern, and theories dim and cold,  
To commune with reality so bright!  
How sweet to bring at last the rich reward  
Of lengthened brain-wrought labour, and to say  
'Thy sympathy hath helped me to succeed.'



## SCENE II.

*A quiet summer evening. ALETHEA standing in a secluded part of the garden of her home adjacent to an old plantation.*

TIME.—*A few days before the day fixed for her marriage.*

ALETHEA.

A FEW days more ! Ah what a change for me,  
A happy change ! O kind few days that bring it —  
A blissful change ! Speed swift bright days that  
bring it,—

A change the sense of which thrills through my  
soul,

And makes it burst its bonds and soar in song.

*A few days more, a few days more,  
Ah what a change for me !  
Then I shall enter through Love's door  
To full felicity.*

*No more alone to bear one fear,  
Or have an untold dread,  
To leave my path, his sweet voice hear  
And choose his path instead.*

*A few days more, then it will be  
My duty to obey,—  
A duty pleasant, joyous, free  
As warbler's winsome lay.  
I'll seek to do each fond behest,  
To merit each fond smile,—  
I'll strive to make his life more blest  
His sadness to beguile.*

*He praises oft my sunny hair,  
And lauds my peach-bloom cheeks,—  
I would I were far far more fair  
When thus my dear one speaks.  
I feel unworthy him, and yet  
He takes me for his wife,—  
I'll yield to him—to pay my debt—  
The service of my life.*

How calming is this tranquil evening hour  
Of sylvan solitude ! The tall old oaks  
Near which I stand have seen full many a year,  
And sheltered many a maiden such as I  
Beneath their branches, and in future time  
Will shelter many more. My favourite flower,  
The white convolvulus, climbs in the hedge  
In spotless beauty as it used to do  
In summers long gone by ; and as it will,  
Fanned by the breath of summers yet to come ;  
Nature is all unchanged, and yet to me  
How changed it seems to-night ! Despite my joy  
A curious sense of sadness steals upon me,  
When I reflect that guileless happy days  
Of thoughtless youth are now for ever past,  
That though life's grandest, highest, gift is mine,  
A love returned tenfold, yet doubtless too  
A share of sorrow is appointed me !

### SCENE III.

*A dull autumn morning. ALETHEA at a window looking out on  
the depressing prospect.*

*TIME.—Several months after.*

ALETHEA.

THE blow is softened now by kindly Time,  
And I can breathe again. On this the day  
Poor Edgar starts for clearer sunnier skies  
I first can ponder on these dreary weeks  
Which lately heavily have passed away.  
How different from the glad and trustful days  
I thought they would have proved !

When first I heard  
That he was stricken by a sickness sore,  
A sickness nigh to death, I scarcely felt  
Deep sorrow, but a paralysing pain  
My senses dulled. I had no power to think,  
And life seemed dead within me ; but at length  
Came slowly back to me the happy thought,

Yes—happy even 'mid such grief as mine :  
My loved one needed help, and oh what joy  
Was mine to give it, and I almost blessed  
The form of his distress, that at the least  
It did not keep me from him. For what woe  
Unspeakable must be endured by those  
Whose loved ones have been smitten, and who  
know

That they are suffering helpless and alone,  
And that the same disease which tortures keeps  
Apart from them the dear ones whose kind voice  
And sympathetic touch is their chief stay.  
If such a case of misery were mine,  
Contagion's direst mischief I would brave  
If I could thereby comfort those I love.

A chill received when heated and fatigued  
One day in Summer's youth-time (when the breeze  
Had Winter's breath still on it) was enough  
To lay my Edgar low. Physicians came  
And went, with faces grave and measured tread ;  
The case was serious, they said, and none  
Could tell the issue. They were clever men

Nor meant to be unkind ; yet when I saw  
Them watch his pangs of pain and laboured  
    breathing  
With interest all professional and cold,  
It wellnigh made me mad.

                                    The crisis came  
And passed ;—the point once turned, he slowly  
    gained

A little strength. The cautious doctors said  
His youth would grapple on the side of life,  
And he might yet recover. But for him  
Should be no more of hard and brain-wrought toil  
Or anxious eager thought :—his life must pass  
In quiet,—and his winters he must spend  
For several years abroad. Thus he will leave  
Chill England's shores to-day. Ah cruel blast  
And muddy cold grey sky that drives him from me !  
Oh callous North-wind, couldst thou not restrain  
Thy blighting force and let my darling live  
In the same land as I ? Life-giving Sun,  
Oh why dost thou not shine, when, if thou didst,  
It would rejoice so many yearning hearts !

## SCENE IV.

*Early morning. EDGAR standing on a balcony enjoying the fresh balmy air and watching the last traces of the sunrise die away in the sky.*

EDGAR.

So yesterday was Christmas-day, and yet  
Such weather joyous and unwinter-like,—  
In truth such weather as in recent years  
We northerners but rarely have received  
In sunless seasons which we summer call  
Merely from force of custom.

Many trees  
Retain their leaves—and fair it is to see  
Green leaves at Christmas-time, while gorgeous  
flowers,  
Which never bloom in Britain save when placed  
In houses cramped and stifling with damp heat,  
Display their beauty in the open air.  
A few days since I saw—exquisite sight !

An avenue of fine camellia plants,  
And all in fullest flower! and as I looked  
Up the long vista while the luscious red  
Commingled in my vision with the white,  
And as I further gazed upon the scene  
Of which they were the centre, and drank in  
Its wondrous loveliness, I felt deep joy  
That still amid its mingled pain and grief  
Such sweetness is preserved on earth to soothe  
And elevate men's thoughts. They who have  
lived

Only in climates where the fickle weather  
Is changeful as the winds, can never know  
The bliss of living where, come calm or storm,  
No blighting blast can reach to wither up  
Our vital energies and make our life  
A misery. This is not such a clime  
As Italy's in winter, where the sun  
Makes summer as its warm rays penetrate,  
But in the shade the cutting searching wind  
Blows keenly from the snowy Apennines;  
Nor such a clime as that whose azure waves  
Reflect with dazzling force the Day-king's heat  
Upon the olive-groves and pine-clad crags



Of the gay Riviera ;—but whose warmth  
Dies with the day, and night is damp and  
cold.

*Here* winds are never cold nor ever harm  
With treacherous touch the trustful invalid,  
Who, lured by the soft sunlight, walks abroad.  
Here balmy night is pleasant and as mild  
As is the day, while the defiled sea-shore  
Appears, at least at night, most beautiful  
Viewed from a distance ; and the dotted lights  
From many a cottage on the lone crag-sides  
Vie with the stars from out the deep blue sky  
In forming a fair circlet round the bay  
Like flashing jewels round the shapely arm  
Of youth-dowered maid.

What were the lines I strung  
Together, to employ an idle hour ?

*Christmas in the summer sunshine ! O how beautiful it seems,—  
Clothed in gladness are its moments, realizing poets' dreams,*

*While its hours pass swiftly from us, how we wish  
they were for aye,  
That their bright and buoyant pleasure with its  
guilelessness might stay.*

*Christmas in the summer sunshine! softly blows  
the scented breeze  
And its coming stirs the frondage of the stately  
staid palm-trees.  
Calm the noble realm of Ocean, fair the dotted fish-  
ing skiffs,  
And the verdant cactus growing on the gaunt up-  
rising cliffs.*

*All of Flora's cultured beauty freely is revealed to  
view,  
And among the vine-clad ridges of sweet wild-flowers  
not a few,  
Soft azaleas, rich gardenias, ope their blossoms to the  
air,  
With the rose, and trained geranium:—while its  
wild type too is there.*

*Fitting the moon's glorious radiance for the people  
as they pass*

*On the eve of merry Christmas, to and from the  
midnight mass ;*

*And for strolling serenaders who invade the silent  
hours*

*With what doubtless they consider some of music's  
choicest flowers.*

*Christmas in the summer sunshine ! neither snow  
nor frost are here,*

*Which, though they may charm the healthy, fill the  
invalid with fear ;*

*And in sooth, with dear ones round him, spends he  
happily the day,*

*Pining not for that loved treasure—his chill home  
so far away.*

Yet ! 'tis the far away that makes me sad,

For distance is indeed a barrier,

Let bards say what they will ; for though I *hope*

Hale health is coming back, I sometimes *feel*

As though I had not very long to live ;  
And if 'tis so, it seems a cruel fate  
To have to spend my few remaining days  
So far away from those my heart holds dear,  
But chiefly from the one my whole soul loves.

## SCENE V.

*A quiet spot in the garden of Edgar's home. Several months afterwards. EDGAR and ALETHEA.*

EDGAR.

THE doctors think that I shall ne'er be well.  
They do not say so openly, but still  
It is not hard to understand the drift  
Of their calm-spoken diplomatic phrases  
About 'much care' and 'quiet' and 'escape  
From English winters to the sunny south ;'  
And when I asked if my complaint were cured,  
They hesitated, hemmed, then, smiling, said,  
'Alleviated were the better term.'  
Ah, it is hard to hear a cruel fate  
Thus subtly hinted at in civil words  
And courteous commonplaces, and to have  
One's hopes annihilated in soft tones,  
Meant to be pitiful, perchance, but which  
Seem by their wily softness but to scorn

And counterfeit a kindness not heart-felt.  
'Tis bitter to reflect my roll of years  
Will probably be briefer than of those  
My comrades—and no better men than I  
(And this when life to me was ever sweet).  
'Tis bitter to reflect that theirs may be  
The bright career of steadfast earnest toil  
Towards some right worthy goal, which, gained  
at last,  
Rewards them with a name, while unto me  
'Tis given but to spend in listless calm  
My few remaining days.

But bitterer still

It is, that I must loose you now, my love,  
From cherished vows which we have interchanged.  
For 'twere not right that I should link your fate  
With mine as now it is, and bring perchance  
On others—innocent—the hopeless bane  
Of cureless sickness which I feel myself.  
Grief is the rule of this our earthly life,  
And joy but the exception ; wherefore then  
Should I expect of joy a greater share  
Than is apportioned unto thousands who  
Have suffered, still are suffering, or will suffer

As helplessly as I :—and surely too  
My mind should be far calmer than is his  
Who sowed himself the seeds of his disease,  
Whose every pang is now intensified  
By keen remorse, and seething in whose soul  
No thought save one—the ever-gnawing thought  
But for himself what he would now have been.  
Yet oh, Alethea, 'tis crushing grief  
To lose you, darling, were it not my duty,  
My duty thought and prayed about for weeks,  
I could not say the word to set you free.

## ALETHEA.

The word to set me free ! that were indeed  
Most difficult to say, for we are bound  
Indissolubly :—and though, Edgar dear,  
You tell me that for us all hope is o'er  
Of earthly union : yet there still remains  
A radiant future seen through mists of tears,  
Since present life is not our whole existence.  
Your name means 'happy honour,' and mine own  
'Truth : '—if we live our little span of days  
Worthy of such high names, it will be well

With us, whate'er may come. Yet when I look  
On your poor face and mark the touch of pain,  
Then, though I feel that doubtless you are right  
In that you say, it makes me doubly sad  
To think the fate that makes you suffer so,  
Remorseless and unsatisfied, compels  
You thus to blight your life; but if fond love  
And sympathy can cheer, you yet may find  
Some earthly joy remaining even to you.



## SCENE VI.

*Midwinter in a certain little island abroad. A pretty room with opened windows overlooking a lovely garden, and a still lovelier prospect beyond.*

TIME.—*A few years afterwards, towards sunset, and only a few days before Edgar's death. EDGAR and ALETHEA.*

EDGAR.

TRULY a grand, a noble thing is life—  
This most I feel when I am passing from it ;  
And life is fair, whatever cynics say.  
But yesterday I lay upon my couch  
And looked upon the clear wide-stretching bay,  
Far, far beneath me shimmering in the sun.  
I saw th' exquisite azure of the sky,  
The dainty outlines of palm-branches shown  
More clearly by the strong light showered upon  
    them,  
The countless clustering vines and varied trees  
In all the gentle ever-pleasing glow

Of vegetation almost tropical,  
Which makes each cultivated garden here  
Appear a paradise. Banana-trees  
I saw with all their load of luscious fruit  
The graceful guava-trees with light-green leaves  
The loquats with their deeper verdant tints,—  
The little plant they call 'Brazilian cherry,'  
With bright green leaves, and fruit of strawberry  
size,—

The stately yam-tree with its blossoms white  
And lily-like ;—fair to the eye indeed,  
A tree whose oval leaves afford good shade  
In summer. Surely it is strangely sweet  
To loiter in such gardens when cool Night  
Has conquered the fierce ardour of the day,—  
And see the meek moon rise o'er azure seas,—  
And view the tranquil heavens don their jewels,  
And hear machêtes<sup>1</sup> swift tingling forth an air  
Of music,—haply a soft mazy dance.  
Yet, dear Alethea, it is decreed  
That I must leave you, darling, but although  
'Tis sad to leave you and this beauteous world,  
'Tis sweet to die amid such loveliness.

<sup>1</sup> Portuguese guitars.

And daily I thank God that He hath not  
Condemned me to this sickness slow and sure  
Immured in one close room from day to day,  
Through the long, lagging, weary winter-time,  
But given me the means wherewith to dwell  
In climate such as this where balmy air  
And sunshine even in winter, are not wanting ;  
A climate where the invalid can pass,  
However languid, many happy hours  
Communing with God's fair earth out of doors.  
Do you remeniber, dear, some years ago  
You told me if fond love and sympathy  
Could soothe me that I surely should be cheered ?  
And you have kept your word : I have been  
cheered,  
And comforted, and though no marriage-bond  
Has been between us as we once had hoped,  
Our souls have been as one. Take my poor thanks  
For coming thus to sojourn where I dwelt  
And giving me your loving tireless care  
'Mid all my pain and suffering, made less hard  
To bear by your kind presence.

## ALETHEA.

I am glad

It was my lot to render you this service,—  
A service small indeed compared with love  
Such as I bear you, darling.

## EDGAR.

When I die,

Let me be buried in my native land,  
Not here, although I love this sea-girt shore,  
Where graveyards are embowered mid beauteous  
trees,  
And overlook mayhap light rippling waves  
As blue as the deep azure heavens above them,  
Round whose rude tombs the scented roses cling.  
And still bloom on throughout the sunny year.  
But let me rather lie where chilling rain  
And bitter sleet shall in the winter-time  
Beat on my resting-place. For what care I  
Though placid snows spread o'er my quiet grave  
Their spotless mantle, though wild wintry winds

Sweep o'er it, be it only undisturbed.  
And if 'twere here, perchance it would not be  
For ever left in peace. Alethea,  
For *Time* we shall be separated soon,  
But do not grieve o'ermuch. For me 'twill be  
A glad release from pain, and you and I  
Shall meet in yon pure Home of Love at last.



VERSES OF TRAVEL.





## VERSES OF TRAVEL.

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### A BISCAYAN SUNSET.

APRIL 17TH, 1879.

A GOLDEN halo gilds the sky,  
And the wind-unruffled sea,  
A scene it is where poet's eye  
Could subtle loveliness descry  
Unweariedly.

Hark ! from afar the deep-toned roar  
Of the Atlantic surge—  
Yon sail will soon be seen no more  
Now light-illumed : 'tis fleeting o'er  
The sea-scape's verge.

The stars appear—strange visions rise ;  
Of man's dim destiny  
How typical are these calm skies !  
While like to man the sad sea lies  
Troubled though free.

No wingèd wanderer slowly cleaves  
The silence in his flight ;—  
His burning throne the Warmth-King leaves  
While the fair firmament receives  
The crown'd Queen Night.

AFTER SUNSET OFF PAUILLAC,  
FRANCE.

APRIL 18TH, 1879.

DAY hath departed, save a few faint streaks  
Of light that fleck the bosom of the sky ;  
These, and these only, stay to testify  
Of proud Night's conquest. Hark ! that sound  
bespeaks

Our nearness to the Ocean, and I see  
Its ripples at my feet ;—a soft clear song  
Is breeze-borne from a vessel's deck along.  
The crew with musical monotony  
Raise anchor swiftly, and the ship doth glide  
In silence, save for the chant growing low  
Wave-wafted landwards. Little doth she  
know

If calms will come, or fiercest storms betide :—  
Alas, o'er life's strange sea we all must sail  
Like her, nor know if calm or tempest will pre-  
vail.

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF THE  
PYRENEES.

MAJESTIC snow-crowned mountains distant far,  
Yet to man's seeming near! How oft we feel  
In life 'tis even thus! though there the view,  
That seems so close before us full and fair,  
May ne'er be realized, while here it needs  
But purpose long-sustained to gain the goal  
And prove the seeming real.

Whilst I gaze  
Upon your cloud-capt summits, thoughts arise  
Telling of eager spirits not a few  
Who like to me have looked in ages past,  
Filled with the selfsame dream of human change,  
And your immutability compared  
With man's brief mundane course. How many too  
Have lounged and looked on your cloud-piercing  
peaks,  
Nor felt the deep reflection such a scene

Is fitted well to give ! Strange ! but 'tis so,  
And will be ever while the world endures ;  
That which to one seems passion-fraught, sublime,  
Another views,—deems fine,—and passes on.

ON SEEING SOME PYRENEAN  
WILD ROSES.

MAY 17TH, 1879.

How sweet the sight of roses  
In an English lane in June,  
When every flower reposes  
Beneath the tranquil moon !

How strange the sight of roses,  
Albeit they are wild,—  
Seen where a valley closes,  
And mountains huge are piled !

Upon whose sides remaining  
Is strewn the purest snow,  
Still by its presence chaining  
The tide of Spring's soft glow.

Yes, wondrous seems completely  
A contrast such as this,  
And yet, 'tis ordered meetly  
And cannot be amiss ;—

For God has kept the pureness  
Of snow upon the hill,  
The roses in secureness  
To flourish, too, at will.

## THE SOUTHERN NIGHT.

AH ! how unlike the Southern night  
To that of Northern skies,  
Where tedious twilight mocks its flight  
And day but slowly dies !  
For there pale Eve's star-studded veil  
O'er all is swiftly cast,  
Peace seemeth wafted on the gale ;—  
Care for a while is past.

### *Chorus.*

O ! the mellow Southern summer's night,  
How sweet it is to stray  
Mid scenes which the moonbeam's fairy light  
Makes lovelier far than day !

How fair the widely-stretching woods,  
That clothe the spacious plain ;  
While Silence, queen-like, o'er them broods  
In solitary reign :—



How fair the river's crystal thread,  
Seen faintly from afar,  
And glimmering pure as on it shed  
Are gleams from many a star!

*Chorus.*

O! the mellow Southern summer's night, etc.

How fair perchance the mountains lie,  
Though distant wondrous clear,  
Their snow-wrapt peaks against the sky  
Viewed dimly tier on tier ;—  
How fair the sleeping landscape seems,  
While here and there are heard  
Sounds breathing music's softest dreams  
Or laughter-laden word!

*Chorus.*

O! the mellow Southern summer's night, etc.

## A DIRGE OF DECAY.

Near Argelez in the Department of the Hautes Pyrénées, France,  
are several ruins of old castles said to have been built by  
the English in the 15th century.

WITHIN these walls  
Now half-forgotten, lonely and decayed,  
Only the birds their resting-place have made,  
And scarce a step within them ever falls.

Yet doubtless here  
Stupendous deeds of valour have been wrought,—  
Deeds that to many thousands then were fraught  
With heart-felt weal or deep and direful fear.

Brave of the brave  
Our soldiers must assuredly have been,  
So long to hold for our proud Island-queen  
This land which then seemed far across the wave.

Yes, far from aid,  
From friends, from home, must have appeared their  
lot,  
And yet (O courage great !) they faltered not,  
Nor, filled with craven terror, were afraid ;

Not even though  
Full oft encompassed, like unto a stag  
By hounds engirt ; but rallied round their flag,  
And kept its honour stainless from the foe.

Why is it then  
That low in ruins are these castles laid ?  
It is because old courage had decayed,—  
It is because old fire had left our men.

This should we learn  
While earth remaineth thus,—wars cannot cease ;  
That everything hath limits,—even peace ;  
So let the lamp of ancient courage burn.

LINES ON LOOKING UP THE VALE OF  
BARÉGES FROM ST. SAUVEUR, HAUTES  
PYRÉNÉES, FRANCE.

Lo! what a glorious prospect is revealed  
Of mountains, snow, and verdant loveliness ;  
Upon the sloping sides of monarch heights  
Reposes now the mist, most gracefully,  
In wreaths almost transparent ; presently  
Its mass divides, and clear against the sky  
Appears each giant summit grandly calm,  
And seeming proud that its lone God-wrought  
strength

So long defies decay. One ever feels  
In gazing on such scenes how weak is man,  
Yet still how much his art hath made increase  
To this rare store of beauty. Each small patch  
Perceived upon the mountain-side, reclaimed

*Lines on looking up the Vale of Baréges.* 103

From barren wilderness, hath wondrous power  
To cheer the eye. To me it often seems  
As though no prospect were indeed complete  
Without some trace of toil to leaven it.

FROM LA RAILLÈRE  
TO PONT D'ESPAGNE AND LAC DE GAUBE.

O PATH which seems to have a loveliness  
More than of Earth,  
How can one who has viewed thy scenes express  
The thoughts that unto them have owed their  
birth?

How can he tell of all the wondrous way  
Where grandeur vies  
With beauty, rich and rare, to bear the sway  
In winning and retaining ravished eyes?

How can he tell of rocks and ridges wild  
Which lie around?  
Of mighty mountain-peaks on high up-piled?  
Of ceaseless cataracts' majestic sound?

How can he well describe rich-foliaged trees  
That screen the sides ?

Blown to and fro by gentle summer breeze,—  
In chasms where the vale the rocks divides.

How can he well describe the stately pines  
Steadfast and strong ?  
(True type of one whose sun not always shines,  
And yet who bravely bears grief's load along.)

High-foaming Cérizet can he portray ?  
Beyond the power  
Of language even feebly to convey  
Its peerless beauty, wonder-working dower.

Much less the wilder falls at Pont d'Espagne  
Truly sublime,—  
Whose weird white floods sing songs of sturdy  
strain,  
For aye the same in nature-ordered time.

When Lac de Gaube is reached, how can he tell  
    The silent sight  
Of snow and glaciers? Soon our bosoms swell  
With feelings half of fear, half of delight.

The fairy rainbow tints which o'er the falls  
    Glimmer and play,  
The stilly clearness of the lake enthralls,  
Yes this and all, in us soon holds full sway.

Though none can well describe these scenes, shall  
    not  
    They in the mind  
Remain to bring forth fruit, a gladsome spot  
In memory, a gift for good designed !



ON LOOKING UP THE VALE OF  
CAUTERETS BY NIGHT.

THE Night is here,  
Yet gazing pensively  
Into its gloom, a vista strangely clear  
In outline soft we see.

The mountain forms  
In solemn grandeur rise,  
Each summit still the strength of countless storms  
For countless years defies.

The dark-green pines  
Clothe nearly all around.  
How lone the slopes on which each cold star  
shines!  
Nor doth a single sound

108 *On looking up the Vale of Canterets.*

Invade the calm,—  
Or by its presence melt  
The sense of awe and vastness, like a charm  
Deeply, profoundly felt.

## SONNET

*On seeing a Sham Fight of French Troops at Orthez, in exactly the same position as those occupied by the English and French Armies in the memorable action of February 14th, 1814.*

A FEBRUARY day in years long fled,  
A fiercely raging battle hour by hour,  
At length gained by a mind of mighty power  
Through wonder-working skill.

French troops are spread  
Along the ridge of hills and fertile vales  
Where that stern strife was once. For mimic war  
They are arranged precisely as of yore,  
Is the result as in the old men's tales  
Who saw the real conflict? Nay, not so,  
The French now hold the heights. Fictitious foes  
Are beaten by the patriots who oppose.  
'The English hounds who wrought our pride's  
o'erthrow,'  
Doubtless thinks many a soldier, 'now would feel,  
If they were here once more, the force of French-  
men's steel.'

## THE CITY OF THE CID.—1879.

BURGOS, once city of the Cid, all hail !

Thou standest in the plain of old Castile,  
An interest in the land which one can feel  
Although no more is heard the clang of mail

Within thy grass-grown streets. For though, no  
doubt

The hand of Change is working, yet it seems  
To me as if thou wert but in my dreams  
Inwove with sound of arms and warlike shout.

How noble thy cathedral's gorgeous pile !

How quaint its frescoed front ! These carved  
forms,

Here sculptured, had their life as many storms  
Of care as ours throughout its weary while ?

These images of saints within, whose life,  
Judging but from their features, seemed all  
calm,  
Had they than we more nearly reached that  
balm  
Which Christians find the antidote of strife?

No! Life was doubtless then a darker thing  
Than now it is. For certainly our lives  
Are moulded by our faith. He only thrives  
Whose faith is true of flight and strong of wing.

And theirs though firm could never have been  
true,  
Since it forbade the only Light to shine  
Which shows the truth on Earth, that Light  
divine,  
By which God means that man his course  
shall view,

And haply change if needful. Thoughts like  
these  
Come as strange fruit seen first 'neath alien  
skies,

As now I gaze around. Rich musings rise  
While looking on thee, Burgos,—some which  
please

And some which sadden. When at close of day  
I stand in thy cathedral's solemn shades  
Among its peerless chapels, none invades,  
To break the sacred calm of aisle and bay.

## THE ESCORIAL, 1879.

THE Escorial, a glooming pile, standing at the foot of the Guadarrama range of mountains, is the burial-place of the Spanish Kings, and it is so vast that it looks imposing even amid natural grandeur.

How sternly the Escorial stands,—  
The burial-place of kings,  
Who at disloyal Death's commands  
Must leave their princely things,

And hie to this stupendous pile,  
That looks so cold and lone,—  
Where nature scarcely dares to smile,<sup>1</sup>  
And verdure seems unknown,—

<sup>1</sup> The Sierra de Guadarrama are immediately behind the Escorial. Their peaks are arid and bare, and the adjacent country is almost treeless, and burnt up by the sun in summer.

To this sad spot where Summer's glare  
Beats fiercest and most strong,—  
Where swooping from his mountain lair  
Winter abideth long.

Ah, yes, it must be change indeed  
From grandeur<sup>1</sup> such as theirs  
To such a spot to come with speed,  
To be Corruption's heirs.

For evermore to lay aside  
Insignia of power,—  
All-humbled stately monarch pride  
In death's still awful hour.

And yet 'twere better thus to be  
Entombed 'mid marble<sup>2</sup> walls,

<sup>1</sup> The royal palace of Madrid is reputed to be the finest in Europe.

<sup>2</sup> Each king and queen's coffin is placed in a niche in the wall of a chamber reserved for the remains of sovereigns who have reigned and their wives.

A slab is placed over the niche, and name and date inscribed on it. The chamber, whose walls are of marble, is shown to visitors.



Where even his foot who comes to see  
In seeming reverence falls,

Than to be huddled with the rest  
In some dank burial-ground,  
Where in a few years' time at best  
One's place could not be found.<sup>1</sup>

Men prate that Nature ne'er obtains  
Her long-predestined dues,  
And show that we with mighty pains  
Should alter all our views

On points of sepulchre. For me,  
Though o'er it fall Oblivion's frost,  
I trust for aye my grave shall be  
Neither disturbed nor lost.

<sup>1</sup> On the Continent—infamous custom!—unless the ground is purchased in perpetuity, the remains of those interred are removed after five or ten years,—*where*, it were not well to say,—and the plot of land prepared for others.

## TOLEDO IN 1879.

TOLEDO! what a mint of memories,  
Of olden tale and legend, round the name  
Are clustered! Mingled with such dreams as these  
Come flashes of its brilliant blades of fame.

How proudly must old kings in joy have thought  
Of their fair city fitted to be great,  
Placed on a hill, by streams surrounded! Naught,  
Deemed they, can alter now its high estate.

Ah! most imperial it must once have seemed,  
When capital of many a mighty power,  
And Spanish sunshine in its fierceness gleamed  
On lofty battlement and soaring tower.

In days when from the 'Sun-gate'<sup>1</sup> oft at morn  
Issued a goodly Moorish martial train

<sup>1</sup> The 'Puerta del Sol,' a still-remaining Moorish gateway, is one of the finest relics of old Toledo.

Of turbaned knights, ere starting sternly sworn  
To conquer for the Crescent more of Spain.

With scimitars unsheathed swift rode they forth,  
Not seldom causing terror all around  
Among the peasants,—as towards the north  
They rode, with Burgos<sup>1</sup> as their utmost bound.

Then afterwards returning, Victory  
Attendant on their standards, with what joy  
Would comrades greet them who had come to see  
Night's cooling wings Day's sultriness destroy!

And when the sixth Alonso<sup>2</sup> conquered it,  
Forcing it back into the Christian fold,  
Made statelier still, 'twas deemed the seat of wit,  
Its people's speech the nation's purest mould.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Burgos was then the Christian capital of Spain.

<sup>2</sup> There is an anachronism here which it is hoped will be pardoned for the sake of the symmetry of the piece. Alonso VI. flourished in the eleventh century, Cervantes in the fourteenth.

<sup>3</sup> 'To speak *en proprio Toledano* has since the time of Cervantes been equivalent to *the best Spanish*.'

When in more recent days the Spanish name  
Had grown the most renowned of all the world,  
St. Quentin and Lepanto knew the aim  
Of keen Toledan darts at foemen hurl'd.

All these reflections come in ceaseless train,  
While gazing sadly on its fell decay.  
I feel not shame that it has given me pain  
To think its relics soon must pass away.

Farewell, far-famed Toledo! I shall ne'er  
Forget thy mien,—appearing as indeed  
Plunged in the deepest sleep. Few could repair  
Spain's ancient cities; Life is what they need.

## LINES

ON PASSING IN AN EXPRESS TRAIN THROUGH BADAJOZ,  
NOTED FOR ITS FAMOUS SIEGE DURING THE  
PENINSULAR WAR.

AND is this Badajoz ? where once was heard  
The clash of arms, and breaching cannons' roar,  
Where from the dim-lit parallels came forth  
The forlorn hope at Duty's stern command ?  
Where swords and bayonets bristled on cold walls,  
And multitudes of marksmen sought to stay  
The assailing columns in their onward course ?  
Where, when the town was gained, grim Plunder  
stalked

Amid its devastated streets, and made  
Them ghastlier even than War ?

Years yield strange fruit  
Of alteration in forsaken paths ;  
Yet was I strangely struck with the great change  
Wrought here in Badajoz.

Can it be true  
That here a most prosaic railway-station  
Is now erected, with its telegraph,

Poor restaurant, and porters to be 'tipped' ?  
And that of travellers, who tread its platform  
When trains a moment stop, scarce any think  
Of that bold siege which for all coming years  
Has blazoned 'Badajoz' on Fame's high scroll ?

## MOONLIGHT ON THE TAGUS.

'TIS moonlight on the Tagus ! A full flood  
Of soft-spun sparkling radiance dowers the whole  
With dazzling splendour,—save where shadows lie  
Upon the river's bosom, sheltering  
The coward Darkness now a while dethroned  
By the Moon's great, though seeming gentle might,  
Ah me, how beautiful ! Deep azure sky,  
Deep azure sea, and steadfast-beaming stars,—  
A dreamy blissful languor stealeth fast  
Over my soul, whilst gazing musingly  
Upon this prospect steeped in rapt repose,—  
And I forget the busy throng of life  
Which it presents by day,—and almost now  
I could imagine it some magic realm  
Enchanted in far fairy land, beyond  
The power of mortal reach.

But soon a voice  
Says, 'Supper's come at last, let's eat and then to  
bed.'

## CINTRA IN 1879.

CINTRA,<sup>1</sup> our Byron gave thy name to fame  
By his description grand, and sweet, and true ;  
But though thy ' mountain's ever beauteous brow '  
And many other objects are unchanged,  
Yet altered are full many of the scenes  
On which the poet looked, and mused and sang.  
No ' frugal monks their little relics show '  
To strangers at ' Our Lady's house of woe.'  
One sees their tiny cells, their cork-wood walls,  
Honorius's cave, and that is all.  
The former home of ' England's wealthiest son '  
No longer has its ' portals gaping wide,'  
Its ' halls deserted,' or great ' giant weeds '  
Within its garden ground :—but it is fair,  
Fair as the lordly traveller declared  
It was of yore. While ' Marialva's dome '  
Is changed in that 'tis now historical,

<sup>1</sup> See *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, canto 1.



Its fame a lasting one, whilst in his day  
Its interest was eclipsed by other themes  
Of ever-varying War:—the deed performed  
Within its gates too recent not to be  
Left unto record of the daily gossip,  
And comments of the press which rarely live.  
All now is different :—a classic scene  
Thou standest, Cintra, clothed with more of fame  
(To English minds at least) from Byron's words  
Than from thy matchless beauty, could that be.  
And mayhap, in the years to come, some poet  
Treading the self-same scenes will tell how one,  
A writer of poor verses, tried to tell  
What changes there had been since Byron wrote ;  
And he, in turn, with glowing eloquence  
Will paint with poet's art the tide of Change  
On Cintra since these lines were given forth.

## VERSES

*On a vase filled with beautiful Roses, Camellias and other flowers,  
with different sprays of plants, grown in the open air at  
Madeira, in December.*

EXQUISITE flowers !

Come ye to tell of summer hours,  
Of balmy breeze, of lengthened days,  
Of warblers' wondrous lays ?

Thus come ye not,  
For not in summer lies your lot,  
No lengthened days attend your birth  
Nor songsters' merry mirth.

Yet gentle gales  
Are near, and sunshine stills prevails,  
As in frail loveliness ye lie  
Too soon, alas ! to die.

Ah fair, how fair,  
Here nature worketh everywhere,—  
If thus in winter sweet to see,  
What must the spring-time be !

And yet, although  
All plants enchant in tropic glow,  
Upon the zephyrs is not spent  
The wealth of fragrant scent

Of England's flowers.  
Only the rose from Britain's bowers  
Retains its perfume. No ! oh no !  
Naught equals the pure glow

Of England's spring !  
When every floweret seems to bring  
New sweets to blend with the soft breeze  
Among the blossoming trees.

Yet 'tis a power,  
This grandeur of each plant and flower,  
To make the poet's heart rejoice  
And sing with gladsome voice.

Of what he feels ;  
Yet rarely even he reveals  
The radiant wealth of blissful thought  
Such flowers to him have brought.

## A LESTÉ<sup>1</sup> SUNRISE IN MADEIRA.

MANY-hued the sky this morn,  
Beautiful the day is born,  
Fleecy clouds on every side  
Sunshine's coming seem to hide,  
But the other cloudlets stand  
Ready waiting its command.

Ay, they are a gorgeous group,  
Almost each tint in the troop,  
Red, and light blue, and maroon,  
And some white appearing soon,  
And a glorious purple shade  
Over all is deftly laid.

<sup>1</sup> The Lesté is a south-east wind felt in Madeira, and frequently prevalent for several days. At the beginning or close of a Lesté the sunrises and sunsets are superb.

O'er the mountains purple clouds  
Of deep colour hang, like shrouds ;  
Purple masses faint are shed  
O'er the Ocean's wave-strewn bed,  
Fine the light which now one sees,  
On the palms and tropic trees.

Swiftly fades the splendid sky  
To a dimly purple dye ;  
Gently stirs the landward breeze  
Shapely-formed banana-trees.  
Dawn's first freshness wears away,  
And begins the balmy day.

## MADEIRA—MOONLIGHT.

STEALING softly o'er the mountains,  
Skirting Funchal's scattered town,  
To the eastward, comes the moonlight  
Flinging its effulgence down ;  
Making every object glitter  
In its clear and tranquil sheen,  
While the Ocean lately troubled  
Seemeth lapt in peace serene.

Subtle moonlight ! how thy radiance  
With a magic often shown  
Touches and refines a landscape  
With a glamour all thine own !  
So thou causest here the houses  
Mean, nay squalid, in the light,  
To appear a pearly pureness  
Rather than a dirty white.

For the filth and streets so narrow,  
With vile odours bred by day,  
Save for Nature's glorious grandeur,  
Takes admiring thoughts away;  
But the moonbeam maketh all things  
Gain at least a semblance meet,  
Till at length the wide-spread prospect  
Has an aspect almost sweet.



## AT SANTA CRUZ DE TENERIFE.

*Feb. 19, 1880.*

'TIS fashionable now to say  
That skill displayed in war is wrong,  
That they who formed our England's sway,  
And made her empire firm and strong,

Were callous cut-throats nothing less,—  
Who joyed in war for its own sake,—  
Who yearned to banish happiness,  
Who loved with blood their thirst to slake.

And yet while landing here to-day,  
On the same shore which years ago  
Saw from its crag-encircled bay  
Our Nelson's only overthrow,

I thought, Do those who grub and prose,  
And by their lights their betters try,  
Perform their life-tasks more than those  
Whose task is but 'to do or die'?

SUNDAY MORNING OFF MAZAGAN,  
MOROCCO.

*March 14, 1880.*

STRANGE spreading town of gleaming white  
Girt round with sand and seething spray !

A magic city, Fancy-dight,  
Thou seemest this calm Sabbath-day.

Within thy walls can be discerned  
The flat-roofed orient dwelling-place,—  
And near are wells, whose wheels are turned  
By pensive camel's steadfast pace.

Dark Moors in their fantastic dress,  
In haste to reach us, leave the shore,—  
And soon they make the distance less,  
So strong the stroke of their long oar.

Now they have gained us, most with pride  
Disdain the aid that steps afford,

Bare feet from heel-less slippers glide,  
And, cat-like, swift they spring on board.

All speak at once with gestures quaint,  
And few but in an unknown tongue.

Those in the boats take up the plaint,  
And on the deck still more have sprung.

Ours is the only ship, save one,  
That near to us at anchor rides,  
And she content with work well done  
Is waiting till to-morrow's tides.

And from her mizen-mast there floats  
That flag so dear to British heart,—  
The flag whose mingled hue denotes  
A union naught should ever part.

A welcome standard ! it appears  
A pleasant sign that even here  
Are some who share our hopes and fears,  
Who pray like us, like us revere.

## GIBRALTAR.

1880.

‘SWEET Seville’<sup>1</sup> has been sung—and Cadiz too  
By Byron,<sup>2</sup> for the beauty of her girls,—  
Yet know I not that one hath given thy due  
To thee on whose proud crest the cloud-wreath  
curls.

Let me attempt thy praise, then, for I know  
That worthier pens will write of foreign towns,—  
For now no place has praise with us, if so  
It be mayhap a jewel of our Crown’s.

‘Sweet Seville’s’ Guadalquivir, famed in song,  
Is nothing save a nearly stagnant stream.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See ‘Seville,’ by J. E. Carpenter.

<sup>2</sup> Vide Lord Byron’s song, ‘The Girl of Cadiz.’

<sup>3</sup> Except when in flood.

The beauty of the Cadiz maiden throng  
Exists,—but in a 'poet's airy dream.'

Here in Gibraltar all retains an air  
Of honest truth. Odourless streets are clean,  
And everything is made the most of, where  
Man's art avails to soften down the scene.

The gardens of the Alameda, full  
Of semi-tropic plants and shady trees,  
Pleasant to lounge in their recesses cool  
On summer eves to catch the soft sea-breeze.

Yet great the toil and patience must have been  
Before at last was made such rocky ground  
To nourish shrub, or plant, or aught of green.  
Cheering it is to hear the home-like sound

Of English tongues,—to see our cared-for men,—  
Contrasted with the Spaniards wan and weak,  
Guarding their posts, as they with eager ken  
Look on our cannon, which have but to speak—

To put their lines to rout.<sup>1</sup> How lovely gleams  
The Rock at sunrise ! The grey looming clouds  
Glow in the new-born light like glorious dreams,  
While Shadow still the tranquil bay enshrouds.

Ay, grim Gibraltar, thou indeed art fair !  
And more than that, a place in which one may  
Live with true home-like comfort, and a share  
Of a good climate, brightening Life's dull day.

<sup>1</sup> A conspicuous row of white stone sentry-boxes are erected at the extremity of Spanish territory, and from them Spanish soldiers continually watch us. Doubtless they are within easy range of our artillery, and it is equally certain that were we to fire on them, they have no guns in position with which to answer us.

## GRANADA.

FAIR Granada, our masters of the pen  
Have written much of thee, and not a few  
Who ne'er have seen thee, hold dream-wrought  
and fair,  
A city in their fancy by thy name  
Seen clearly in their mental eyes, as if  
'Twere mirrored in their senses. Thus with me ;  
But when I saw, my fond ideal fell.  
It was not that thy famed Alhambra hill  
Lacked grandeur, or its silent courts were void  
Of architectural wealth, or that the Vega,<sup>1</sup>  
Shut in by mountains and the silent snows,<sup>2</sup>  
Was aught save fair ; yet still the impression  
stays  
Unceasingly within me, caused perchance  
By narrow Spanish streets, dull, dirty, white,

<sup>1</sup> The plain of Granada.

<sup>2</sup> Of the Sierra Nevada.



Or likelier that the sight of scaffoldings  
And fresh-wrought antique work amid the old  
In the Alhambra's courts<sup>1</sup> destroy their charm.

<sup>1</sup> The Spanish government long neglected the Alhambra, but, finding it a source of revenue by the attraction of visitors, they have begun to renew it. Doubtless therefore, in a few years, much of what is thought to be ancient will in reality be quite modern. Two examples will suffice. I myself saw a boy putting up some frescoes in exact imitation of the Moorish workmanship, and new ears have been given to some of the stone lions so recently (April, 1880) that the colour has not yet had time to assimilate to that of the other portion of the images to which they belong.

## PALMS BY MOONLIGHT AT ALICANTE.

PALMS by moonlight ! Waving palms,  
How each thought of you embalms  
In memory the spot whereon I saw you last !

Wonderfully, softly clear,—  
Did you on that night appear,  
Each branch, each leaf, distinct in strange ethereal  
sheen.

Scarce like Europe seemed that scene,—  
Where the eye rich hues could glean,  
Cheering the mind as doth a gentle soothing  
dream.

But like mellow Eastern tale,  
In which genii ride the gale,  
Stealing among such trees on mystic errands sent.

Soon the sweet and glowing sight  
Made romantic with delight  
My heart, as on its radiance I fondly gazed.

Whilst 'mid heaven of purest blue  
The calm moon her glances threw  
Upon these palms, soft visions floating came,—

Orient sentiments that stole  
Swiftly, thrilling through my soul,  
Their keenly subtle power how deeply strongly  
felt !

And with ravished eye and heart  
Wished I never to depart.  
Looking, I longed to live, and see such scene  
for ever.

## A SPOT IN SWITZERLAND.

A SILVERN haze is over all. At hand  
Are gently swaying poplars, rippling larches  
And firmly rooted firs,—while further off  
Gleam azure waters of a waveless lake.  
Beyond again are mountains ; not, as oft,  
Gaunt snow-capped monarch peaks,—but bright  
with verdure.

The rocks cast shadows quaint upon the grass,  
White châteaux peep from mid close clustering  
vines ;

Gay boats glide gently on with buoyant sail  
Widely outspread. The scene though not  
sublime

Seems full of happiness and calm content.



## LINES

SUGGESTED BY SEEING A SMALL GREY STONE ON THE ROAD,  
AT THE SUMMIT OF THE SIMPLON PASS,  
SEPTEMBER 14TH, 1880.

QUAINT little common stone ! Strange may have  
been

Existence with you for full many a year.—  
A world of changes you perchance have seen,—  
Although tormented by no heart-wrought fear,  
No soul-distress, nor sorrow's blinding tear.

What direful tempests may have passed you by  
When mid the riven mountains thunder rolled,  
And sent his messengers athwart the sky,—  
The rushing storm-clouds of shapes manifold  
Which in deep darkness the horizon hold

Until his wrath is o'er. The silent snows  
May oft have lain upon you, when the hands  
Of winter framed his lofty couch, and chose  
The glaciers for his lair. His dread commands  
How ghastly ever make the higher lands

Doubtless in midnight hour, when tranquil stars  
Shine down on snow-drifts, on the glaciers lone,  
And on snow-laden pines : when nothing mars  
The wondrous scene to human eye scarce known :  
Where Nature rears mid rocks her frost-bound  
throne,

Yet for how many ages year by year  
Such prospects you have seen ! Perceiving too  
Sun-risings and sun-settings the most clear  
And most magnificent, the loveliest hue  
Of Nature never hidden from your view.

Near you, may be, have wandered weary men  
Mid fierce storm-battles fought on wintry  
nights ;—  
Near you, perchance, have happened now and  
then  
Most wondrous things, more strange and curious  
sights  
Than sages know who are the world's most  
lustrous lights.

Yet now you're broken up to make the road,  
A poor despised chip ! And haply too  
You will be useless in your new abode,  
And in the nook, where heedlessly man threw  
You as he passed, shrink from his callous view.

## THE CERTOSA OF PAVIA ;

A GREAT ITALIAN CONVENT, AND GRAND WORK OF ART.

GREAT monument of human skill !  
How vast must be the power and scope  
Of minds which can conceive,—of hands  
That shape such edifices rare ;—  
And doth the splendid sight not show  
Convincingly how wondrous is  
The grandeur, mightiness of Man,  
Despite his body frail, and train  
Of weary woes, which almost ever  
Attends him, ere King Death with sway  
Imperious demands his spoil ?  
And do such sights not educate,  
If we may phrase it thus, the soul,  
Leading us far more to believe  
In the proud majesty of Art ?  
The marble cuttings exquisite



Near the high altar, the mosaics  
Gorgeous ; yet though so finely wrought,  
Designed in truly simple taste,  
The stately stalls of workmanship  
Replete with loveliness and rich  
In cunning inlaid work. The aspect  
Of the exterior, the carvings  
So realistic near the door—  
The outer door—of Roman coins  
(Though strange to see these Pagan heads)  
At entrance to a Christian church.  
All, all make up a noble whole,  
And fill the heart with feelings which  
'Twere better that it ne'er forgot.



## SONGS AND LYRICS.



## THE LATE AUTUMN IS DYING.

THE late Autumn is dying,  
Dead leaves strew the land—  
Signs of sorrow now lying  
On every hand ;  
While I walk full of sadness'  
In a garden once fair,  
Where before all was gladness,  
I find trouble there.

In a hedge-row wind-shaken  
To wildest unrest,  
Forlorn and forsaken,  
I see a bird's nest,—  
Its soft down decaying—  
Its fledglings all flown,—  
Nought save the shell staying  
Deserted and lone.

Then the thought cometh cleaving  
The depths of my mind—  
Soon we too must be leaving  
Our loved homes behind,—  
The drear tomb will enclose us,  
Life's pilgrimage o'er,—  
“And the place that now knows us  
Shall know us no more.”

## UNFULFILLED YEARNINGS.

WHEN Summer's sweetest influence  
Is shed o'er plain and hill,  
And Nature gains her recompense  
For working Winter's will,  
We feel a void—a weary sense  
Of something wanting still.

In Autumn, when each searing leaf  
With sorrow aye is fraught,  
And every garnered golden sheaf  
Yields fruit for saddest thought,  
We feel a void—our spirits' grief  
For something vainly sought.

When Winter with his ice-cold hand  
Grasps giant-like the ground,  
And stiff and stark lies all the land  
In frost's firm fetters bound,  
We feel a void—we understand  
'Tis something still unfound.

When Spring returns with fairest face,  
Filling the earth with song,  
And gladness seems in every place,  
And love and life are strong,  
Ah me! even then we fail to trace  
The dream for which we long.



NO SUN EVER ROSE WITHOUT  
SETTING.

No sun ever rose without setting,  
At eve giving place to the night ;  
No night ever stayed, but begetting  
The dawn, it evanished in light.

No joy ever came without bringing  
Some shade to remind us of grief ;  
To sorrow there ever is clinging  
A something to render relief.

There is nought on the Earth but containeth  
A power its effects to efface,  
And therefore in Life there remaineth  
For grief and rejoicing a place.

156 *No Sun ever rose without Setting.*

Then gird on the armour of gladness  
To combat Despair with true scorn,  
And live through thy night-time of sadness  
In hope of the glories of morn.

GLAD DREAMS OF THE FUTURE  
COME O'ER US.

GLAD dreams of the Future come o'er us,  
All radiantly spotless and bright,  
And bid us look up—for before us  
Are vistas of boundless delight.

O come when our bosoms are weary,  
Life-burdened and longing for rest,  
And point through the darkness still dreary  
To a land which by sunlight is blest.

O come when the world has been gaining  
O'er our souls an insidious sway,  
Our fickle rash footsteps restraining  
From wandering out of the way.

158 *Glad Dreams of the Future come o'er us.*

O come, that o'er all of Earth's changes  
Your light as a guide may be shed,  
Whether like unto others, or strange is,  
The path that in Life we must tread.

And when finished at length is Life's story,  
Completed its words and its acts,  
Then burst on our sight in your glory  
Not as *dreams*, but *immutable facts*.

## A SONG OF HOPE.

THE vinery's foliage  
In Autumn grows sere,  
For its wealth of bright beauty  
Fades out with the year :  
All its branches, where lately  
Grape clusters were spread,  
Become barren and sapless  
And seem as though dead.

But long ere the soft Spring  
Clothes the land in glad green,  
On its boughs beauteous blossoms  
Are lavishly seen,  
As it uses the warmth  
Which is placed in its power,  
And so rallies more swiftly  
From Winter's rude hour.

Thus if we, when some sorrow  
O'erwhelming appears,  
And which threatens to banish  
The light of our years,  
Would the blessings still left  
In our service employ,  
Then whate'er be the issue,  
'Twould bring us but joy.

•

## HOW OFT ARISE TO SOOTHE OUR WOE.

How oft arise to soothe our woe,  
And dissipate our sadness,  
Fond dreams of faces long ago  
When life was love and gladness.  
Like,\* yet unlike the lights that guide  
The storm-tossed o'er the ocean,  
They in our secret souls abide,  
Cherished with deep devotion.

The halcyon Past seems to possess,  
When we review its story,  
One radiance of happiness,  
Nor cloud to dim its glory ;

\* *Like*, because they lead us on to joy. *Unlike*, because they are ever with us, and not as a beacon, having their influence felt merely at one spot of our voyage.

So ah, 'tis well, when lonely lies  
Life's pathway girt with sorrow,  
That sometimes visions fair should rise  
Which from our Past we borrow.



## SONG.

THE PURITAN'S FAREWELL TO HIS BETROTHED, 1642.

SHE—

WHEN gladly long ago my heart  
Was given to thy keeping,  
I never thought that we might part  
In anguish or in weeping.  
Then wherefore cause this wanton woe—  
Such lavish love betraying—  
Even though harsh duty bids thee go,  
Thy faction's call obeying?

HE—

Nay, speak not so, my peerless love,  
Fond words the truth perverting;  
Wouldst thou not have me proved above  
A wretch his post deserting?

And if on earth we meet no more,  
When now in grief we sever,  
We'll surely greet on that Bright Shore  
Where all is bliss for ever.

There, when each feeling is confessed,  
Thou'lt know my crushing sorrow—  
The burning pangs which pierced my breast  
Ere leaving thee to-morrow.  
Lo, listen to the distant chime,  
To us a note of sadness ;  
Then let us spend our little time  
In calm if not in gladness.

SHE (*after a pause*)—

Right, darling, thou must rush to arms,  
Destroying dreams of staying ;  
I'll strive to soothe my heart's alarms  
By patience and by praying.

## HAPPINESS HERE.

THERE is happiness, dearest—  
True happiness here,—  
Though the troubles thou fearest  
Perchance may appear :  
For mid every emotion,  
Of weal or of woe,  
Our depths of devotion  
No respite shall know.

Yes,—in Life's twisted tissue  
Of gladness and grief,  
Love, whate'er be the issue,  
Still renders relief.  
So there's happiness, dearest—  
True happiness here,—  
Though the troubles thou fearest  
Perchance may appear.

## A SONG IN THE SOUTH.

THE proud sun is setting, most fair to behold,  
Going down to his rest in a garment of gold,  
And, like a young maiden who wishes good-bye  
To her dear chosen lover, deep blushes the sky,  
All its beautiful tints, ah ! how fair to behold  
As the sun goeth down in his garment of gold.

Light blue and dark blue and purple are there,  
Red, brown, and golden with bounty how rare !  
Black clouds o'er the mountains, white clouds o'er  
the sea,  
And a landward breeze cometh soft, joyous, and  
free.  
A prospect how glorious in truth to behold  
As the sun goeth down in his garment of gold.

All wondrously blent as He only can do  
Who gives to each tint its own delicate hue,  
Who makes Nature's paintings so gorgeously  
    grand,  
That man can but copy, not daring to stand  
In rivalry open. Yes, fair to behold  
Is the sun going down in his garment of gold.

## TWILIGHT MEMORIES.

How once I loved the twilight hour  
Of Summer's blissful day,  
While watching from each leafy bower  
The daylight die away,  
And clasping in mine own the hand  
Of one I loved the best,  
Whose converse soothed, as the sight of land  
Doth mariners distressed.

Right bravely he had borne his part  
In Earth's incessant strife,  
Still labouring on with dauntless heart  
Amid the ills of Life.  
Had known adversity and pain,—  
Hopes blighted—bitter wrong,—  
Yet all to sour his soul were vain:  
In Heaven-born strength 'twas strong.

And oft he talked of his vanished years  
In the gentle gloaming tide,  
Bidding me all my joys and fears  
Implicitly confide,  
And wisely would my future trace,  
Then leaving things of Time,  
In raptured tones and with upturned face  
Would speak of themes sublime.

His that strange wordless eloquence,  
Always a wondrous power,  
Which sways the soul with a force intense  
In the calm of such an hour.  
And when I walk where shadows steal  
O'er Summer's fairy view,  
I never, never fail to feel  
That influence anew.

## A WINTRY MOOR AT NIGHT.

MY way led o'er a wintry waste  
    When evening shades were falling,  
And the soft sheep-bells rung in haste  
    The fleecy flocks were calling,—  
For still a few had strayed afield  
    To wander mid the heather,  
Seeking the food the hill-sides yield  
    Despite such withering weather.

*Chorus.* A wintry moor! A wintry moor!  
    Alone at dark of night,  
Where in the world may one procure  
    More desolate a sight?

Black barren rocks were on the right,  
    Uprising bleak and lone,  
Like the fabled forms of men of might  
    Fast petrified to stone.



And far and wide on every side,  
The mazy mist extended,  
Slowly its mass did upwards glide,  
Till with the sky it blended.  
*Chorus.* A wintry moor ! etc.

I thought of deeds of darkness done  
On that drear waste so lonely !  
That there had perished many an one  
For lack of succour only.  
And I strode along with swifter pace,  
A thrill o'er my bosom stealing,  
Reaching at last my resting-place  
With pleasurable feeling.  
*Chorus.* A wintry moor ! etc.

## A SEA SONG.

I COULD not as a landsman live,  
Pursuing his poor pleasure,  
Each dull delight his course may give  
Has nought in it to measure  
With the true transport of the soul,  
O'er every sense prevailing,  
When 'neath our feet the wild waves roll,  
We o'er the ocean sailing.

*Chorus.* A sailor's life ! a sailor's life !  
Upon the swelling sea,  
Whose surges roar in ceaseless strife—  
A sailor's life for me.

I love it when in summer-time  
It lies, all ill concealing,  
And o'er its ripples comes the chime  
Of church-bells softly stealing.

I love it when in grandest storm,  
Like some great monster playing ;  
It spurns on high the vessel's form,  
To mock it ere its slaying.

*Chorus.* A sailor's life ! etc.

Then, as our voyage is nearly gone,  
And soon to port returning,  
I love the waves which waft me on  
To soothe my constant yearning.  
And when the dear land is espied—  
Dispelling all our sadness—  
I bless the swiftly flowing tide  
Which bears me on to gladness.

*Chorus.* A sailor's life ! etc.

## WHY DO I TRACE.

WHY do I trace  
On your loved face  
Such weary wealth of sorrow,  
Where late beamed joy  
With nought to cloy,  
Caused by the cares to-morrow ?

The world I know  
Is full of woe,  
Encircled round with trouble,—  
Yet merely sighs  
And mournful eyes,—  
But make our griefs redouble.

Look up in haste !  
Nor longer waste  
Your life in weak bemoanings ;—

Cast grim Despair  
From out his lair !  
You've known enough of groanings.

No skies o'ercast  
One whit more fast  
Because we thus are cheerful,—  
Clouds come apace  
With frowning face  
Full oft when we are tearful.

Then may we here  
Spurn foolish fear,  
Nor let fond Hope forsake us,  
So having joy  
With nought to cloy  
Until the storm o'ertake us.

## A PRACTICAL THEORY OF LIFE.

WHEN musing on the course of Life  
How many seem its phases,  
Yet every one of them is rife  
With trebly tangled mazes.

And though our prospects all are fair,  
A scene made for enjoying,  
Some canker-worm intrudeth there  
Our perfect bliss destroying.

One man is strong and has delight  
Merely in Life's possessing,  
But pinching Poverty's bleak blight  
Marreth his every blessing.

Another's wealth and friends agree  
To lavish pleasures on him,  
Yet look, alas ! 'tis clear to see  
Disease's curse upon him ;

Disease—for which weak human skill  
Gives scant alleviation,—  
He is doomed to dread Existence still  
Despite his smiling station.

A third has pulse of purest health  
Which yields him nought save gladness,  
But private griefs amid his wealth  
Impart a sense of sadness.

If we the daily deeds recite  
Which form Life's *present* measure,  
The *wrong* preponderates o'er the *right*,  
And suffering over pleasure.

And thus whate'er our lot may be,  
Our life is but a bubble,  
Blown from some bleak and cruel sea  
By the tornado Trouble.

Ah ! what a mystery is this !  
 And yet if we revolve it,  
 Perchance we may not muse amiss,  
 But find a clue to solve it.

It oft appears absurd to believe  
 In a God of infinite kindness,  
 Who, seeming paradox, can leave  
 Us in such woe and blindness,

In perfect Goodness—omnipotent Power,  
 Permitting Evil to enter  
 Its fair dominions, and to shower  
 Such griefs on man, their centre,

But if we accept the sceptic view,  
 Denying a God and Life's fruition,  
 What do we gain even were that true ?  
 For it is merely demolition

Of many hopes which man holds dear  
 Of a swiftly coming morrow,  
 When we shall know with joy sincere  
 No sense of sin or sorrow,



Without revealing to our sight  
A future fair and clearer :  
Nay, leaving all in deepest night—  
Far darker, lone and drearer.

For we still must bear the woes of Life  
With the longings which oft come o'er us  
Whilst seeing no rest beyond its strife,  
Save nothingness before us.

While a Heavenly hope amid our woe  
Will cheer our Life's endeavour,  
And yield us nought save good, although  
At death it may fly for ever.

Thus, even if we set aside  
Religion's proofs completely,  
It gives more joy our minds to guide  
Till, apprehending meetly

That doubtless though upon the earth  
Our path is oft perplexing,  
Its lack of love and chastened mirth  
Our spirits sorely vexing,

There must exist a place which gained  
     Through faith and strong endeavour,  
 What seems unjust will be explained,  
     Or rectified for ever :—

That there's a God who made Man's mind  
     With certain comprehension,  
 But yet Who has seen fit to bind  
     Its limits of extension.

Who also deemed it best for Man  
     Here to experience sadness,  
 As training for a higher plan  
     Of grandly growing gladness.

Thus human Reason's utmost sphere  
     Of thought is reached full early ;  
 And thus to us men's lots appear  
     So often dealt unfairly.

That Life's dark mysteries but transcend,  
     Not *contradict* our reason,  
 And so when earthly life shall end  
     There comes a sun-lit season,

When with enlarged God-given powers  
And intellects commanding,  
One bliss of Heaven's bright halcyon hours  
Shall be the understanding

Of problems which distressed the sage  
Of deepest skill and learning,  
But now that we have burst our cage  
Are easy of discerning,

While "themes with which we cannot cope"  
Fade 'neath our Heavenly vision,  
"And Earth's worst phrenzies, marring hope,  
*Will mar not* Hope's fruition."

## EVENING THOUGHTS.

IT was evening, and sadness  
    Around me was cast—  
For rejoicing and gladness  
    Too swiftly were past.  
Then methought with deep anguish,  
    In Life's dreary day,  
All we love must soon languish  
    And wither away.

Ah ! how futile each token  
    Of love given here,  
Merely made to be broken  
    When friendships grow sere ;  
Though sweet youth's summer morning  
    Dawned balmy and bright,  
Yet our sorrow soon scorning,  
    It darkened to night.

Thus in bitter bewailing  
    I poured forth my grief,  
When this glad hope prevailing  
    Gave richest relief :  
As the blossoms of May-time  
    Must fade and grow sere,  
Ere the ripe Autumn gay time  
    Of fruit can appear,

So Love's bright buds immortal  
    Must seemingly die,  
Ere within Heaven's portal  
    They blossom on high,  
In fruition for ever  
    To each constant soul  
Who through faithful endeavour  
    Gains Life's glorious goal.

## “I WONDER WHEREFORE.”

“I WONDER wherefore?” is the soul-stirred cry  
Which wells up from the depths of human hearts  
In every sphere of life. From lowly homes  
And princely palaces—from hermits’ nooks  
And seething crowds—from youth and riper age  
And longest length of years—from rich and poor,  
From all who have the manliness to think.  
In health or sickness—happiness or woe—  
Mid Life’s momentous moments or its trifles,  
From whence spring oftentimes our profoundest  
thoughts.

This ceaseless questioning is surely meant  
As greatest food for hope, a token given  
That notwithstanding its abyss of sin,  
Within Man’s soul abide the germs of good.

## THOUGHT-LINKS.

MYSTERIOUS are the links that firmly bind  
Our trains of thought together. First we brood  
On some small trivial matter—tiny germ  
Of somewhat grander musings—then we find  
A thread is woven with our thought, and lo  
It leads to higher themes !—vast vistas new  
For serious contemplation :—and we gain  
Sublimest heights, while God-reflected thoughts  
Transcending Reason flood our human mind.

## JOY AND GRIEF.

NOUGHT gives *true* happiness unless it touch  
Some chord of subtle feeling in the soul,  
And thus what oft appear most trivial things  
Impart such great delight :—a kindly phrase,  
A friendly greeting in the street, or snatch  
Of melody but for a moment heard :—  
Or even some phrases in a general talk  
Addressed to others, heard through being near.  
Each of us is an instrument, but each  
Is in some notes at least diversely strung  
From all our fellows. The musician Joy  
With mystic power can play upon our hearts,  
And through the heart can ope the hidden door  
That guards the sanctuary of the soul.

Grief has an equal power, and quickly finds  
The portals of the soul, but having found,



He enters not to play with skilful touch,  
But roughly beats with rude untutored hand  
Upon responsive tender notes, and so  
Instead of music only discord comes.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF FREQUENT FAILURE.

IN youth's bright morning hours of buoyant life  
Grand contemplations often fill the mind  
With noblest aspirations. While it seems  
To us, as yet scarce touched by sordid care  
And blighting prejudice, quite possible  
Through our unaided efforts to attain  
Some lustrous goal which glitters in our sight :  
A goal which when 'twas won would benefit  
The Universal Brotherhood of Man.  
But as the years roll on we find the dream  
Less easy of fulfilment,—for we feel  
Our ardour less intense, while weary feet  
Glide gently into the poor old-world groove  
We so despised of yore,—and we are fain  
To use fast-failing energy in strife  
'Gainst daily troubles : higher aims forgotten.

## AFTER FIVE YEARS.

AFTER five years !

What changes will have come  
Among the circle of our firmest friends !  
Some will have gone to widely severed lands,—  
While others—than whom none seemed closer  
bound

In silken chains of love—will then perchance,  
Urged by some paltry source of petty feud,  
Made greater by their pride, have ceased to meet  
In harmony. And silent callous Death  
Will certainly have stayed the mortal course  
Of not a few, though friends we have not now  
We shall know then.

In circumstances also  
What changes will have dawned ! The man  
esteemed  
Almost a pauper now may then have wealth

Unbounded,—he whose store of riches seems  
Limitless now may be a beggar then.  
He who enjoys the bliss of nerveless health  
May then be broken down and weak of limb,  
While he who now an invalid, though dowered  
With youth, his ills all conquered, may be strong.

What alterations will have come to pass  
Throughout the world ! Peace in the place of war  
Or war in place of peace ; and the appearance  
Of present party strife in politics  
Will then be altered quite,—while topics new  
Will eagerly be canvassed. Many names  
Novel to us will then have sprung to fame  
In Life's inconstant whirl, while designations  
Notorious now may even be then forgotten.  
Yet there is one thing while the Earth remains  
That will not change, and that one thing is—Change.

## A SONG OF COMFORT.

We feel not always sadness—there are seasons  
When the heart beats in ecstacies of joy,  
Times when our thoughts of sorrow seem but  
    treasons,  
Which truth destroy.

We feel not always daily cares and troubles,—  
And sometimes even life-griefs appear no more,  
All gone as on a lake the rain-drop bubbles  
When showers are o'er.

We feel not always that our hopes are blighted,  
They oftentimes a glad fruition gain,  
And we perceive the good are aye requited  
Who conquer pain.

We should not always grieve, each tribulation  
Is sent to purify and raise the soul,  
And fit it for its glorious destination:  
An Heavenly goal.

## PASSION,

BLIND passion ever proves a maddening power  
Enthroned within us—a sin-garnered dower  
Of quenchless loves and longings—a fierce storm  
Breaking the beauteous boughs, where sheltered  
warm

Repose, like unfledged nestlings, Life's chief joys.  
Its wave sweeps o'er the soul and swift destroys  
Our store of peace—what years of labour cost  
Perchance by one false step for ever lost.

## SOLITUDE.

WHILST mid the throng,  
Which restless moves along  
With eager footsteps o'er the earth,  
But few their noblest thoughts have known,  
Most often when alone  
Come thoughts of worth.

It needs the balm  
Of soul-restoring calm  
To purge the mind of Life's alloy ;  
Thus yielding back Man's highest power,  
His blessèd pristine dower  
Of peace and joy.

And thus do men,  
With keen enraptured ken,  
Their grandest themes fruition give  
In solitude. Truth seems to them  
A more resplendent gem  
While so they live.



## TRUE INSPIRATION.

TRUE inspiration ever seems,  
By causing passion-pain,  
To purify the poet's dreams,  
And elevate his strain.

The common thought, the hackneyed rhyme,  
Its touch can glorify,  
Till men con o'er the dulcet chime  
And scarce such faults descry.

And thus it is, though oft we find  
Imperfect chords like these  
Within the works of a master-mind,  
That rarely they displease.

Whereas though versifiers gain  
A smooth melodious roll,  
Their grandest stanzas flow in vain,  
Nor stir the secret soul.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR FEELINGS.

'TIS strange that what seems grief to-day  
Should bring us bliss to-morrow,—  
That present joy should pass away  
And be in future sorrow.

Yet of events we ever find  
This the unvarying measure,—  
According to our mood of mind  
They yield us pain or pleasure.

## THE HAWTHORN SPRAY.

ENRAPTURED with the loveliness  
That Spring spreads o'er the land,  
A little maiden and a boy  
Are walking hand in hand.

In gladsome tones they gaily talk,  
Nor think of coming care,  
The proud boy plucks a hawthorn bud  
To deck the girl's fair hair.

"Now let this spray a token be,"  
He merrily exclaims,  
"That in the years to come we know  
Nought else save mutual aims.

“ For spotless 'tis ; a symbol meet  
Of this our treaty pure ;  
So may our compact bring us bliss,  
And evermore endure.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Now many years have wearily  
And slowly sped away,  
But still these two are true of heart,  
As on that dear dead day.

And so together oft again  
Amid the spring-tide's glow  
They walk, remembering thankfully  
Their love-pledge long ago.

A pledge which did not prove in vain,  
And never once was slighted ;  
For after tedious years of toil  
In joy they are united.

## MATERNAL LOVE.

MATERNAL love is ever tender and kind,  
From sinful dross of selfishness refined ;  
In infant years it is a tender guide  
To keep us safe from harm on every side ;  
And when our cherished childhood's days are  
    past,  
It nerves us to endure the world's rough blast.

Its mellowed memory is with us still,  
In joy or sorrow, happiness or ill,  
And like some beauteous flower of growth sublime  
Transplanted for awhile to this chill clime,  
It sheds its sweetest fragrance on our way,  
Reviving drooping hearts in Life's dark day.

## PARTING WORDS.

How oft the parting words of loved ones dear  
Are cherished fondly all our lifetime here,  
And Memory, in calm reflection's hour,  
Recalls them to the mind with vivid power ;  
And frequently most bitterly we feel  
The impotence of Time our grief to heal.

Ah ! tender parting words, how soon is felt  
Your influence the hardest heart to melt—  
And as a babe upon its mother's breast  
Is soothed unconsciously to quiet rest,  
So gradually it steals o'er each sad soul,  
And holds our feelings in its firm control.

## HOMeward.

### I.

EACH moment nearing fast her home,  
A ship is cleaving through the foam,—

Home ! ah, how sweet to those  
Who in strange lands have absent been,  
But still recalling each loved scene—

Their heart with rapture glows.  
Thus there is boundless joy on board,  
And jocundly with one accord

Are all prepared to land ;  
For when this last long night is done  
Their hopes rise with the morrow's sun,—  
Their haven is at hand.

Some sense-o'erstrained cannot sleep,  
And through the watches wakeful keep,—  
Longing for dawn of light ;

The deck is paced by dauntless men,  
The night is dark, save now and then  
When stars appear in sight.

## . II.

What was that crash ! that dismal sound  
Which echoes through the darkness round—  
That sharp soul-stricken scream ?  
The glance doth on confusion fall,  
Those on the deck are wild, and all  
Is like a dreadful dream.  
The ship has struck not far from shore,  
But boisterously the billows roar,  
Along a rock-bound bay ;  
Two boats are manned to put to land,  
And struggling hard to gain the strand,  
Pull through the blinding spray,  
Leaving the rest to face their fate as best they  
may.

## III.

The scene so lately still and calm  
Seems nothing now save loud alarm,  
And dread and direful woe—



One sight of sorrow meets the eye  
On deck or down below.  
While wind and seething waters vie  
In working ill around,  
Like sorcerers resolved to try  
Their secret arts profound.  
Shrill shrieks are heard on every side,  
And none now aid nor seek to guide  
The mad unresting crowd,  
Who, scarce aware of what they do,  
Pace passionately the deck ; a few  
Murmur a prayer heartfelt and true,  
Or bitter moans—or curses too  
In accents lewd and loud.

## IV.

Down in a cabin lies a child  
Heedless of death or tumult wild,  
By sleep with blissful dreams beguiled :  
A man reclines, removed a space,  
Scarce entered middle life—  
Yet in whose face you well may trace  
Sad signs of care and strife.

## V.

Now to the infant's side he springs,  
And very speedily he brings  
    His charge from down below.  
He casts one glance upon the storm,  
Then tightly grasps the tiny form—  
    Nor shrinking seems to know.

## VI.

His thoughts revert to long ago,  
    When fragile as this little child,  
    A mother's love upon him smiled  
As it assuaged each infant woe :—  
And taught him to be true and brave  
    In this weak world of sordid strife,  
    And even content to part with life  
Did it perchance another save.  
And then he prays to One above  
To guide him in this deed of love.

## VII.

From the doomed ship without delay  
Through the wild waves he cleaves his way,  
    Needing surpassing strength

And dauntless courage thus to dare  
To hold his burden and to bear

A swim of such a length.

The ruthless waters round him roll,  
He well-nigh loses all control—

Yet still he struggles on ;  
And clasping to his breast the child,  
He grapples with the billows wild  
Till strength is almost gone.

VIII.

But see ! his task is nearly o'er,  
If he can swim a few yards more,  
They surely reach the longed-for shore ;  
Brief moments now their fate will show  
Whether it be of weal or woe.

IX.

And still he shapes his steadfast course  
Straight onward to the land,  
Yet with each stroke makes less the force  
Which he can still command.  
But all seems well—an instant more  
Will see them safely on the shore.

## X.

Sudden a gasp—a gurgling sound—  
    A short convulsive groan,—  
And nothing now is heard around  
    Save the fierce storm alone.  
For he has sunk to rise no more,  
Exhausted with the conflict sore,  
And as a rain-drop falling on a lake  
Ripples its surface, yet can scarcely break  
The depths beneath, so softly thus sinks he  
Into the Ocean of Eternity.

## AN OCEAN GLOAMING.

I PRAY you, hark,—  
What is it that each seems to crave,  
As over each mid-ocean wave  
It groweth dark ?

The angry gale  
Strikes our stout ship in mockery,  
And now they fiercely fight to see  
Who shall prevail.

The seething spray  
Dashes on high, and has the whole  
Range of the deck without control  
Under its sway.

Our sturdy ship's  
Tossings and creaks are like to pain,  
And ofttimes in the surging main  
Her beams she dips.

Look, just in sight,  
Two creamy piles of foam between,  
A little barque is rolling seen  
Mid gathering night.

A signal goes  
Quick up her mast and there remains ;  
" Where now she is," the mate explains,  
" She scarcely knows,

And asks that we  
Should tell her." Swiftly our reply  
Runs up the mast, and then we try  
To find if she

Perceives the sign,  
Ere yet she's out of sight. Full slow  
Pass the dread hours ere Morning's glow  
Makes Night to pine,

And die away.  
But when the light is come at length,  
We're sheltered safe from Ocean's strength  
Within the bay.

## A SUMMER SCENE.

BRIGHT beams of sunlight gild the lawn,  
And the whole landscape seems as drawn  
From some enchanter's treasure ;—  
The songsters carol loud and clear,  
Ah, how I dearly love to hear  
Their sweet melodious measure.

And while I loiter 'neath the trees,  
Delicious perfumes by the breeze  
Are wafted from the hay-field,  
Where village urchins pleasure court,  
And making round the ricks their sport,  
Transform it to a play-field.



Must this fair vision fade away ?  
It must—and for its death to-day  
    I feel a sense of sorrow ;  
But gladness comes to fill its place  
When Hope reminds with smiling face—  
    “ ’Twill live again to-morrow.”

## SUMMER SORROW.

EACH season hath its sadness, and for me  
Summer not least of all. I know not why,  
But though its sylvan beauty soothes my soul  
Into delicious reveries ; while birds,  
Discoursing music, fill my dreamy mind  
With melodies, and thoughts, and deep delight,  
I never felt before—yet still there lurks  
Within my heart a strange unfathomed grief,  
Which, even amidst harsh Autumn's ravages,  
Or grim old Winter's storms, I rarely feel.

## A SUMMER EVENING IN THE WOODS.

How beautiful the forest looks to-night,  
The trees just moving in the still calm air ;  
And very many of the birds delight  
In warbling forth their notes without a care.  
The graceful boughs which erst were gaunt and  
bare  
Have donned their fairest dress; the insects  
keep  
A dreamy, murmuring revel everywhere ;  
But in the woodland glades, so dark and deep,  
Save but for these few sounds, all nature seems  
to sleep.

The stars come slowly out, and very soon  
The summer day in peace and calmness ends;  
And by-and-by, as rises slow the moon,  
Her light with splendour on the scene descends:  
While she amid the clouds her pathway wends  
Majestic as a queen, and they stand near  
Like courtiers round her throne; each object  
lends

Fresh beauty to the landscape dim, yet clear  
Enough to let its wondrous loveliness appear.

Scenes like to this exert a mighty power  
To soothe us, and to cause our minds to  
stray—

If only for a brief and transient hour—  
From weary cares which fill them day by day;  
And soon our thoughts fly swiftly far away  
To some bright reminiscence of the past,  
And for a while engrossed with it they stay;  
And when our reverie is done at last,  
How deeply we regret such moments fly so fast!

## TWILIGHT THOUGHTS.

How charming is the summer eve, removed from  
cities far,  
Where Nature's spotless loveliness nought inter-  
venes to mar ;  
Where wild-rose and convolvulus are woven in  
the hedge,  
And buttercups and foxgloves gay rise from the  
brooklet's edge ;  
Where zephyrs waft their sweetest scents adown  
the waving wood,  
And the soothing songs of Nature's choir impel  
us to intrude :—  
When shadows creep across our path, and Day is  
well-nigh dead,  
'Tis then that Summer ever seems her glamour  
best to spread.

Where in this weary world can more of perfect  
    peace be found,  
Than when on such a scene we gaze in sympathy  
    around ?  
And often will some fair wild flowers more truly  
    touch the heart  
Than the resplendent trophies of rare botanic art ;  
The sweet-briar which, perchance unseen, pours  
    perfume on the air,  
I would not barter for what proved the florist's  
    proudest care ;  
I'll leave the rich their bowers of art in which to  
    rear rare flowers,  
Enough for me each common plant in Summer's  
    gloaming hours.

## THE HEART'S SUMMER.

SWEET is the noon of a summer day  
While low the bees are humming,  
And the village sounds seem far away  
When through the woodlands coming.

Sweet are the hours of a summer night  
When the diamond dew is falling,  
And dreams come with the fading light,  
Soft, soothing, and entralling.

Sweet are the tones of a friendly voice,  
Speaking sympathy in sorrow,  
Whilst bidding us once more rejoice,  
And from Love's store-house borrow.

Sweet is the wondering world's applause  
When fame at last hath found us,  
And (guerdon for toil in a righteous cause)  
Flings victory's wreath around us.

But sweeter far is a heart at rest,  
A heart ne'er soured by sadness—  
Which throbs within a blissful breast  
With a God-imparted gladness.



## A LESSON IN THE GLOAMING.

ONE even of a summer's day  
I walk scarce whither knowing,  
Save by a river's side I stray  
Where balmy winds are blowing.

'Tis the loved hour of twilight's close,  
When o'er the landscape stealing,  
The last faint ray of sunset glows,  
Its beauty half revealing.

Rich foliage hides the rippling stream  
From the fair view completely,  
And gently as in halcyon dream,  
Its murmur softly, sweetly,

Comes zephyr-borne, as on I move  
With light heart void of sadness,

Nor caring what to-morrow prove,  
So that to-day be gladness.

Sudden is heard the splash of oars,  
A sense of pleasure bringing,—  
While plaintively a rower pours  
His soul thus out in singing :

In Summer's choicest day,  
When round each fragrant spray  
The blithesome breezes stray—  
Ah, what delight !  
But brightest days contain  
The seeds of future pain,  
And Winter comes again,  
Their bliss to blight !

Not so the joys of *Mind*,  
Unfathomed, unconfined,  
They soar and leave behind  
Trammels of Earth :—  
They teach mankind to face  
Both honour and disgrace,  
And gain at last the Place  
Which gave them birth.

The boat sweeps on,—the words depart  
In cadences alluring,—  
But they have pierced my flippant heart,  
And left a mark enduring.

## MEADOW MUSINGS.

WHILE treading with purest of pleasure  
The pathways grass-grown of the fields,  
The thought that will come without measure  
Is strange as the fruit that it yields.

We dream that on spot we are standing  
To gaze on the glorious view—  
Perchance some stern Druid commanding  
Performèd his orisons due,

Ere vengeful and fierce as his foeman,  
And eager for spoil and applause,  
He ventured to meet the bold Roman  
To fight in his dear country's cause.

Some Saxon, it may be, with sadness  
Here mourned the mailed Norman's advance,  
And on the morrow he ended his madness  
At the point of the enemy's lance.

Perchance after great baron's wassail—  
In days when such doings were rife,  
With feudal foes here fought each vassal  
In bitter inglorious strife.

Or the Roundhead recounted the glory  
Of routing the gay Cavalier,  
Nor wept, while reciting the story,  
For former companions a tear.

And still as the swiftly winged Ages  
Press on with impetuous pace,  
The fools of the Earth and its sages  
May pause for a while in this place.

Then darting away, will commingle  
In the turmoil with which Life is fraught,  
And never again will they single  
This spot out for care or for thought.

## FLOWER-GATHERING.

Two merry children in a meadow see,  
With faces all aglow with Childhood's glee—  
While finding fragrant flowrets here and there  
To weave into a chaplet fresh and fair,  
Till of the sweet wild flowers they gaily make  
A guerdon to reward the pains they take.

So 'tis, methinks, amid Life's tedious toil,  
And sordid strife and harassing turmoil ;  
As surely as we seek, we pleasures find,  
Which bring kind Hope to cheer each mournful  
mind :

And our attempts to seize them oft repay  
By showering blessings on our weary way.

## GARDEN MUSINGS.

AH, what a sadness wells within our soul  
Whilst loitering in garden where erewhile  
We used to hold sweet interchange of thought  
With a dearly lovèd lost one ; and to know  
Such days are dead for ever ! That for us,  
Though May-time blossoms make the orchard  
trees

Most beauteous to behold, and every sense  
In bliss is saturated by the wealth  
Of Nature's charms profusely spread around,  
There yet remains enthroned within our heart  
A deep, dull void, which nought on earth can fill.

## A COMPARISON.

THE landscape bright is very fair to see,  
And all around the birds are blithely singing ;  
And yonder to that venerable tree  
Tenaciously the ivy's boughs are clinging.

But soon the tree is felled and ta'en away,  
And each slight tendril from its trunk is taken ;  
And now the ivy's beauty will decay,  
Bereft of its support, lone, and forsaken.

So frequently it happens with us all,  
Round some lov'd object twin'd is our affection,  
But soon 'tis snatched away beyond recall,  
And leaves us nothing save its recollection.

Then deepest grief and anguish rend the breast,  
And oft we seem to hear a voice repeating :  
“ Our life is but a shadow at the best,  
And nought abides, but all is brief and fleeting.”



## QUIETUDE.

“QUIETUDE, O quietude,”  
My soul is sadly sighing ;  
For thee, in a mournful mood,  
I ceaselessly am crying ;  
But a voice murmurs softly clear,  
“ *True* quietude is never here.”

Quietude, O quietude,  
Come while Life's waves I'm breasting,  
Bringing with thee all things good,  
Pure peace, and joy, and resting,—  
Yet still the voice—“ No, never here  
Can *perfect* quietude appear.”

Quietude, O quietude,  
Grant me a single token

That sometimes Life's conflict rude  
By perfect peace is broken ;  
But a voice whispers in my ear,  
" *True* quietude is never here."

Quietude, O quietude,  
Mine earthly course is ending,  
Come, and now within me brood,  
Each sin-stained fetter rending ;  
Breathes then the voice with silver sound,  
" In *Heaven* true quietude is found."

## IN TENEBRIS LUX.

'TIS night, and darkness as a pall  
    Enwraps the sable scene,  
Nor doth one glimmering ray recall  
    Where sunshine erst hath been.

Till the moon peereth 'neath a cloud  
    'Mong floods of borrowed light,  
And piercing through the landscape's shroud,  
    Dispels the gloom of night.

So 'tis in life ; mid deepest woe,  
    Oft drawing nigh despair,  
God-borrowed beams alone still show  
    That joy abideth there.

## A MORNING MEDITATION.

Now the black night will speedily be gone,  
And the delicious dawning draweth near—  
Charming each sense, while calmly gazing on  
The freshly budding beauty which is here ;  
Almost a paradise doth soon appear,  
Dowered with a glittering flood of dewdrops  
    bright ;  
As the sun's radiance from a higher sphere  
Seems to produce, even by its gladsome sight,  
In careworn human hearts a wonderful delight.

Ah ! who at sunrise could be aught save glad !  
For 'tis a prototype of perfect day,  
When we shall wake to bliss, no longer sad,  
And feel the glowing God-begotten ray

Which bids us fling aside all fears which may  
Still cleave to us ; and with enraptured soul  
Speed to the land where trouble flees away  
Before His presence, that long-looked-for goal,  
Where all Earth's weary wounds 'for ever are  
made whole.

## THE WARBLERS' MISSION.

ONE bright day, sad and weary,  
    I wandered the fields,  
Which often, when dreary,  
    Much happiness yields,—  
Yet not softest of sighing  
    Of sweet summer breeze,  
Nor the beauties near lying,  
    My burden could ease.

But a bird's note of gladness,  
    Clear borne on the air,  
Changed my sense of strange sadness  
    And sorrowful care ;—  
And full soon o'er me stealing,  
    In place of my grief,  
Came a rapturous feeling  
    Of peace and relief.

Then I wondered if pinions  
Were given birds thus  
To work, mid God's dominions,  
A mission to us ;—  
Of shedding, midst sadness,  
Rejoicing and love,  
And through soothing and gladness,  
To guide us above.

So perchance they flew ever,  
Devoting their days  
With ceaseless endeavour  
To carolling praise :—  
As true types, though terrestrial,  
Till song-time be o'er,  
Of the angels celestial  
Who chant and adore.

## MIDNIGHT MUSINGS.

THE moonbeams' pure brightness  
Has entered my room,  
Thus shedding some lightness  
Where late all was gloom.  
Yet it leaves much uncertain  
Which Day would make clear,  
For the Night's darksome curtain  
Still lies dim and drear.

So, methinks, as in sadness  
I restlessly toss,  
'Tis with dreams of past gladness  
Our spirits that cross :—  
Though oftentimes cheering  
Our souls by their light,  
We by their appearing  
Perceive our deep night.



“ 'TIS GONE.”

“ 'Tis gone,” with mournful voice we say,  
When some great joy departs ;  
And we pursue our weary way  
With sad and heavy hearts.

“ 'Tis gone,” with gladsome voice we cry,  
When grief or pain is o'er :—  
And all the prospect far and nigh  
Is brighter than before.

Seems it not strange that keenest woe  
This phrase can thus express,  
And yet be often used to show  
The highest happiness ?

## A LIFE'S EPITOME.

A COTTAGE home : a peaceful place  
Where sorrow hides her dreaded face ;  
Husband and wife, a happy pair,  
Who thankfully Life's blessings share ;  
And living far from towns' turmoil,  
They simply crave a "leave to toil !"

\* \* \* \*

A workhouse full of reckless din,  
Where gladness rarely enters in :  
A dying man now sinking fast,  
Yet doubtless conscious to the last.  
His senses steeped in wrathful woe,  
Such as alone the poor can know,  
When spite of struggles long and brave  
Their death but fills a pauper's grave.

ACROSTIC.—BURNS.

BORN of the people with a dower of song ;—  
Unlearnt in academic lore, yet strong ;  
Ranging each chord of lyric minstrelsy  
'Neath genius-tutored fingers grandly free ;  
Still sweet and clear thy tones for Time  
    eterne shall be.

ACROSTIC.—COWPER.

CALM and clear-toned the music of thy song,  
Of depths diviner than to bards belong,  
Who scale Parnassian heights with sordid aim :—  
Pure as a ray of brightly flashing flame  
Eradiating from Truth's torch to show  
Rash Man a heavenward path amid Life's woe.

ACROSTIC.—THE ELDER HOOD.

How brilliant and how versatile art thou,—  
Of every style a master. Deep-souled thought  
On many themes is here, rare puns, and now  
Disports a freak of fancy genius-fraught.

ACROSTIC.—KIRKE WHITE.

KIND and true-hearted was thy youthful life,  
In every manly attribute most rife ;  
Rich in a mind rare cultured, and which sought  
Knowledge with pursuit keen, and ever thought  
Each effort well repaid that learning brought.

Wise thought on such as thee doth cheer the  
heart,  
Having their course before us as a chart,  
In which is shown a way whereby each one,  
Though sore the toil and scorching be Life's sun,  
Elated shall receive God's glad " Well done."

## A LIFE-CHRONICLE.

### I.

LONG years ago a peasant boy  
Lives as his widowed mother's joy,  
    Her cherished firstborn son ;  
For though her love the others share,  
They are but babes—for them the care  
    Of life has scarce begun.  
While the brave brother manfully  
    Strives steadfastly to gain their bread,  
Resolved to do as well as he  
    Is able in their father's stead.

## II.

He little learning could acquire,  
Except when sitting at the fire,  
When work was done on a wintry night,  
But then it was his chief delight  
To linger o'er some well-conned page,  
Dowered with the wisdom of the sage.  
His thought for every lesser one  
    How charming 'twas to view ;  
And often would he join the fun  
    As leader of the crew.  
Yet sometimes when apart from man,  
    Upon the lone hill-side,  
His future anxiously would scan,  
    And long for one to guide  
His steps to higher spheres of life,  
If even through severest strife.

## III.

But soon his mood would grow more gay,  
Like lark which soars at dawn of day ;  
And then before his eyes would play  
Visions of regions far away.



Yet calmly he resolved to stay  
Till some brief years were o'er,  
And then a fond farewell to say,  
And leave his native shore,  
Boldly to seek his fortune there,  
And never yield him to despair.

\* \* \* \* \*

## IV.

The time now comes to say farewell,  
That word how full of sadness !  
And yet for aught which one may tell  
The harbinger of gladness.  
At least to think so sore he tries  
When with stout heart but wistful eyes  
He bids them not to grieve,  
Saying they soon shall have surprise  
Which they will scarce believe.  
Then gently doth bright dreams unfold  
Of his return with wealth untold.

\* \* \* \* \*

## V.

Long years have passed, and now once more  
He views again his native shore ;  
Nor has his stay been spent in vain,  
For ere he crosses now the main  
He has of gold an ample store,  
And better still a well-earned name  
For honest worth, with nought of shame.  
His now indeed a bright career,  
In which each blessing given man here  
Is granted to him, as if sent  
As guerdon for his past content,  
While amid much labour patiently  
He strove against grim poverty ;  
And succouring the deep-distressed,  
Proved now the passion of his breast.  
So when at length in death he slept  
Many a mourner for him wept.

## A DREAM OF LONG AGO.

A DREAM of youth comes o'er me—  
A dream of long ago,  
When life was light before me,  
Nor knew the taint of woe.

'Tis of a sun-lit village  
Built by the bright sea's strand,  
With widespread fields in tillage  
Stretching on every hand,—

Save on one side where moorland  
The landscape closes in,  
Which, though men deemed it poor land,  
Was dowered with blooming whin.

Here there were boundless pleasures  
For me, a town-bred boy ;  
Here first I found the treasures  
That country-folk enjoy.

Great was my bliss bird-nesting,  
When butterflies I sought,  
Or when in quiet resting  
On turf with fragrance fraught.

Its charms indeed were legion,  
With its odours of wild flowers ;  
It seemed a fairy region  
To spend the halcyon hours.

Once with a strange emotion,  
I found a blackbird's brood,  
And watched the dam's devotion,  
Yet dreaded to intrude.

I loved this moorland dearly,  
With its spots for rest and play—  
And in my day-dreams clearly  
Still see it day by day.

How pretty looked the river—  
Which gave the spot its name—  
As its wavelets used to quiver  
Beneath the sunset's flame,

Which dyed them with a lightness  
That soon must disappear,  
Fit emblem of the brightness  
Which human life has here.

What sport to watch the fishers  
As they left their homes at morn—  
Surrounded with well-wishers,  
Holding dread and fear in scorn !

And how gladsome were the greetings  
When they returned at night,  
And merry were the meetings,  
For faces all were bright.

Life here had much of gladness  
Despite its dull day's round,—  
And less of care and sadness  
Than oft in cities found.

How great was my diversion  
    (I was but eight years old)  
When I went a short excursion,  
    A cart my chariot bold.

As onward thus I travelled  
    Mid balmy summer air,  
Life's skein for me was ravelled  
    With bliss in place of care.

I saw them cutting fuel  
    To feed their wintry fire,  
And, ah, I thought it cruel  
    When bidden to retire.

How pleasant the postman meeting,  
    With his merrily sounding horn,  
And his grave yet gladsome greeting  
    Bestowed on me each morn.

While the village people ever,  
    Though rude and unrefined,  
To me seemed good and clever  
    Because they all were kind.

Ah, vision calm and cheering !  
Soul-soothing none the less,  
Despite the callous sneering  
Cold cynics may profess.

Thy memories shall not perish  
Whate'er betide of grief—  
Yes, evermore I'll cherish  
This dream to bring relief.

APOSTROPHE TO AN INK-BOTTLE IN  
AN HOTEL COFFEE-ROOM.

'TIS strange to think how oft your aid  
Has been invoked by men ;  
And what a confidence was made  
Of secrets to you then !

Prosaic words of business life  
By you have been expressed ;  
And you have told the sorest strife  
That burns in lover's breast.

Perchance a little girl or boy  
Employs you for a letter,  
About new scenes, or of their joy  
When loosed from school's firm fetter.



A husband forced, though leal and true,  
In distant land to dwell,  
To his loved wife indites by you  
A tender last farewell.

And sometimes, too, a seeming "swell"  
Enters, and half afraid, he  
Impresses you for a *billet doux*  
On business rather "shady."

"Commercials" pen a dazzling dream  
Of greatly grown connection ;  
And next you aid the swelling stream  
Of filial affection,

Which flows in sadness, as a son,  
From his fond mother parted,  
Grieves that his course, alas, has run  
So far from whence it started.

And so all use you day by day  
In high or humble station ;  
Then each departs upon his way,  
Feeling no obligation !

## IMAGINATION'S HARVEST.

OH, how powerless we seem to secure Fancy's  
dream,

Though before our rapt gaze it be floating ;  
And to garner a mine of the rich gems that  
shine,

Yet are lost for the lack of our noting.

Thus in sickness sometimes, like strange musical  
chimes,

Come sweet visions enchanting to meet us ;  
But they pass from our sight like a bird in its  
flight,

And are gone ere their gladness can greet us.

Then, if buoyant in health, they deny us their  
wealth,

And leave us to commonplace duties ;

Though with bliss Life is fraught, we scarce  
harbour a thought

Of their wondrous though swift-fleeting beauties.

While oft in our mind when their traces we find,

We would pen their pure brilliance for others,

But the glories we see, though entrancing they be,

Are as nought in the eyes of our brothers.



HISTORICAL PIECES.



## HUBERT.

*Scene I.*—The garden of a Manor House on a summer evening.

*Dramatis Personæ.*—Sir Ralph Harton, a frail old man, whose wife had been dead for years. Hubert, his only child in opening manhood.

*Time.*—Immediately after the breaking out of the Civil War, 1642.

*Hubert.* HURRAH! at length the people spring  
To vindicate their right,  
And vainly now shall strive the King  
To vanquish them in fight.  
At last Laud's long despotic course,  
Draws ruin in its train,  
Soon Hampden's words of frenzied force  
The victory shall gain—  
While Charles will rue with deep remorse  
The part which he hath ta'en.  
For England's might shall rise in fight  
Throughout the groaning land—

And War's harsh sound be heard around  
Our homes on every hand.

Our wrongs shall be wiped out in gore,

We'll vanquish what was vaunted,

And so it shall be said once more

That Britons are undaunted.

Then shall we hold a Parliament

Untrammelled, true, and free ;

The Stuart's line will aye repent

Their deeds of tyranny.

Secret intrigues shall not affright,

Nor unordained taxation—

And life will prove a dear delight

To each one in the nation !

*Sir Ralph.* And yet, my son, this coming strife

Will yield us grievous woe ;

Though risking life where death is rife,

God grant you ne'er may know

The agony a father feels

When from his fond child parted ;

Wounds such as these Time seldom heals,

But leaves him broken-hearted.

What anguish 'tis to separate

When Nature's ties are nearest !



Ah! cruel is the withering fate  
Which tears me from my dearest.  
Still go, my son, nor lingering stay,  
All private wishes must give way  
When the public weal in a righteous cause  
Demands a defence for our ancient laws.  
Yet even when the cause is one  
To which my thoughts respond,  
How hard it seems to lose thee, son;  
I long to gaze beyond  
The darkness which enshrouds thy lot  
Amid the surging strife—  
Of Gertrude, Hubert, think'st thou not?  
Gertrude thy promised wife.  
Her father hastes with all his men  
To take the monarch's side;  
Will he permit his daughter then  
To be a traitor's bride?

*Hubert.* Lately on evening calm as this  
We met in woodland yonder,  
Sealing our troth with fervent kiss,  
Knowing we had grown fonder,  
Yet 'twas our lot to ponder  
On what, alas! we now must do;

So sadly passed our interview,  
Feeling it was our parents' due,  
At least, that we should meet no more  
Until the present strife was o'er.  
And thus our pressing grief we strove to  
smother,  
By vowing constant faith to one another.  
So still to me is Gertrude dear,  
We do not part for ever ;  
Then, father mine, thy spirit cheer,  
Though now we're forced to sever.

*Scene II.*—A room in the Manor House. Hubert and Gertrude alone.

*Time.*—Three years afterwards.

*Hubert.* Alas ! my honoured father dead,  
A blighting blow indeed has sped  
When I was absent ; Gertrude, love,  
Thou seem'st a being from above  
Sent to relieve my crushing woe,  
By bliss which mortals rarely know.  
Few words may tell why I am here,  
In thy dear face delighting,

Blessed be the cause which brings thee near,

Our severed ties uniting.

How weary is this woeful time

Of pillaging and slaughter !

No party deeming war a crime,

Blood flowing fast as water.

The golden grain one rarely sees

That all are now requiring,

Few buds upon the orchard trees,

Which ruthless foes are firing,

Shrieks of despair borne by the breeze

Whence peasants are retiring.

The hurried tramp of armed men,

The musketry's rude rattle,

The cries and imprecations when

Amid the brunt of battle.

Such are the sounds which greet mine ear,

Till, saddened with the fray,

I come, my love, to rest me here,

If only for a day.

*Gertrude.* My story too is very brief,

But 'tis a tale of truest grief.

Ah ! Hubert, I felt lone and drear

When thou went'st forth to fight the foe,

And none were left my soul to cheer  
    Along its path of loveless woe.  
The links seemed loosed which brightly bound  
Our hopes and hearts in love profound.  
My father grew morose and stern,  
And harshly swore that I should learn  
My folly thus to thwart his will  
By loving a rebel Roundhead still,  
And that he would go forth and bring  
    For me another lover—  
Who dauntlessly would serve the King,  
    As I should soon discover.  
While thus beset on every side,  
With none to counsel or to guide,  
I scarce knew what I ought to do,  
Then to Sir Harton's house I flew,  
    Craving protection there ;  
And graciously with features pale  
He gravely listened to my tale,  
    Granting me all my prayer.  
He let me take a daughter's part—  
Loving me dearly from his heart ;  
But feebler grew he day by day,  
Dreaming of thee who wert away,

Endangered in the deadly fray ;  
And oft he longed as erst of yore  
To mount his stately steed once more  
To join thee in the field.

But lacking strength, " Heaven's will be done,  
Though strong the yearning for my son,  
Whom God protect and shield."

I need not tell thee how his strength  
Stole stealthily away : at length  
He knew that death was near,

And like a wan and sickly child,  
By sleep when blissfully beguiled,  
He died without a fear.

*Hubert.* Thanks, Gertrude darling, for thy care,  
Ah ! had I but been near to share  
Thy deep devotion to my sire,  
It had been more mine own desire,  
Than that by deeds of might my name  
Should win in war a soldier's fame.  
This is no time for honeyed word,  
Yet what from thy sweet lips I've heard  
Has bid me bless and love thee more  
Than in the peaceful days of yore.  
But, Gertrude, I must leave thee now—

I may no longer tarry ;  
For I my good steed must allow  
Three hours in which to carry  
His master unto his command  
Of Levellers the nearest band.  
The struggle now is nearly done,  
With Cromwell none can cope—  
When a great conflict has been won  
Gone is each royal hope.  
Thy sire and mother are in Spain  
(Having in safety crossed the main) ;  
Then with my vassals still abide,  
Nor from my home depart—  
Until I come to call thee bride  
With blithely beating heart.  
Oh ! give me now a last embrace,  
One glance of thy bright eye  
Will nerve me aught on earth to face,  
Even though it be to die.

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*Scene III.*—Interior of a wretched hovel. Hubert lying wounded. Group of soldiers.

*Time.*—A few days later.

*1st Sol.* 'Tis sad our captain too should feel  
The stroke of the Malignants' steel,

In fight so fearless, brave, and bold,  
He scarcely seemed of mortal mould ;  
And yet among the wounded he  
Would tender as a woman be.  
The dying heard with joy his tread,  
Invoking blessings on his head.  
So kind to all, so gentle too,  
He gave to each his proper due,  
And ever exercised his power  
To check us in a wanton hour.

*2nd Sol.* Cease, ere he wakes—

*Hubert.* (*Opening his eyes—*)

Why am I here,  
In this abode so bare and drear ?  
Why this strange mist before mine eyes,  
Whence phantoms of the past arise ?  
Why this weak trembling of the frame,  
And feelings which I cannot name ?

*1st Sol.* Thou'rt wounded, Captain, but we feel  
Assured our leech thy hurt can heal.

*Hubert.* Nevermore, my race is run,

Here I shall not long remain,  
All my life on earth is done—

Save, perchance, some hours of pain.

(*Delirious.*) Gertrude darling, come to me,

Even mid the din of strife.

When shall I the dear day see

When I rapturous call thee wife?

(*Again he is conscious.*)

Approach, my men, I grow more weak,

My strength speeds swift away,

Then promise me while yet I speak

My mandate to obey.

When I am dead, with charger fleet

Unto my home repair,

And tell the lady Gertrude sweet,

My last thoughts were of her.

And lay me where my fathers sleep,

Within yon lone churchyard,

Where the weird willow seems to keep

A solitary guard.

Farewell! I thank you from my heart

For all the kindness on your part,

May God ———

1st Sol. See the celestial light

Illume his features, as his spirit takes its flight.



## THE BATTLE OF LOUDONHILL.

JUNE 1ST, 1679.

The Scottish Presbyterians, forbidden by the arbitrary enactments of Charles II. to hold religious services according to their much-chèrished manner, were fain to do so in secret. Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, has earned immortal infamy by the cruelties he exercised while dispersing these assemblies with his troopers. It is one of those occasions which is here attempted to be described.

### I.

'TIS Sabbath morn—fair Nature's face  
Showers smiles of freshly glowing grace  
On mountain, crag, and glen,—  
As if to prove to Him above  
Its silent share of lowly love  
Amid proud sullen men ;  
And blithely birds chant loud their lays  
Of adoration and of praise.

## II.

Much people from around are here,  
Yet with a mien of awe and fear,—  
But oft their faces seem to cheer  
As though some blessed boon were near.  
Women and men with one accord  
Are gathered now upon the sward,  
    Vanished at once each petty feud,—  
They are resolved to serve the Lord  
    In way which unto them seems good.

## III.

“Have ye heard of that rash raid  
Ruthless Claverhouse has made?”  
Thus in accents firm yet low  
Oft they murmur to and fro—  
“He has ta'en of us the best,  
But he shall not seize the rest—  
Until at least we struggle sore  
    To hold our own in fight,  
And pray amid the conflict's roar  
    ‘For Scotland and the right.’

IV.

“Why should the King dictate to us  
An alien way to serve the Lord?  
We will not bear such thrall, and thus  
Are met this day with one accord;  
Place sentinels on every hill  
To give us all fit warning due:  
Then put good trust in God’s wise will  
And in our cause and weapons true.”

V.

“If our sweet sisters see the sign  
Of danger passed along the line  
Of distant scouts, they quit the glen,—  
The strife not left to craven men.”  
So speaks a patriarch in the midst, and now  
The congregation at God’s footstool bow,  
And with united voices humbly there  
They plead for pardon and for peace in prayer.

VI.

Then plaintively they sing a psalm,  
And hear the “Word of Life;”

Yet bodes around a baneful calm

Presaging coming strife.

For see ! there hastes a messenger,

Of toil-worn form but dauntless air :

“Look to your ranks, rouse ye like men,—

The black dragoons have gained the glen.”

VII.

Full speedily the men divide

In companies, on either side

According to their arms ;

A motley host indeed they seem,

As now the sun's meridian beam

Makes scythes and mattocks burnished gleam

Among the weapons soldiers deem

Fitter for war's alarms.

VIII.

The aged minister with head made bare

Amid a solemn silence offers prayer ;

“Lord, spare the green and take the ripe ; we know

Thou rulest all things in this world of woe ;

Then grant but this and Scotland's just demand,

Aught else we leave in Thy Almighty Hand.”

IX.

The pleading ends ; each peasant hies  
    His proper place to fill ;  
Along their front a marsh there lies—  
    Behind their post a hill.  
While resolutely thus they tread,  
    Of father, mother, wife,  
Doubtless they think, yet dare the dread  
    And danger of the strife,  
Feeling its issue will restore  
Freedom to their down-trodden shore.

X.

Lo! list to the sound which now bursts on the ear,  
A sound that full oft hath begotten wild fear—  
The prelude to plunder and rapine and woe,  
As all in the bold little army well know.  
Pricking swift as the billows when ploughed  
    by the gale,  
While their steeds spurn the turf as they dash  
    up the vale,  
The dragoons are seen moving, and every man  
Views the dark crest of Claverhouse leading  
    the van.

## XI.

"Now look to your carbines," cries he with a  
laugh—

"And each ranting rebel you'll scatter like chaff,  
The harvest is over, the thrashers are come,  
With swords for their flails, for their music  
a drum,

And your famous leech-craft will certainly heal  
The festering wound of the Covenant's zeal."

## XII.

Sharp comes the volley—from the vale  
Shrouded in sable smoke

Strange sounds arise ; and when a wail  
Pierces its cloud-wrapt cloak,

Perchance it is a sign that one  
Ends there his earthly strife—

His lowly race at last hath run,  
Entering eternal life.

Perchance a sign that one of those  
Who scoffed and had no fear,  
His summons come, reluctant goes  
Before God to appear.

XIII.

Yet still the peasants ne'er o'erthrown  
With patient courage hold their own ;  
Try as they may, the soldiers see  
They win not thus the victory.  
So Claverhouse recalls each man  
Till he direct some further plan,  
The lines upon his stubborn face  
Showing he feels the dire disgrace  
That well-tried troops—false Charles's boast—  
Should vanquished be by peasant host.

XIV.

But soon enraged he orders all.  
The cavalry within his call  
Full at the charge with frenzied force  
Across the moss to take their course,  
Seeking to make the rout complete  
By crushing all beneath their feet.  
And gallantly the men advance  
With pointed sword, and glittering lance,  
And crests which in the sun-beams dance.

## XV.

But every effort is in vain,  
And steeds, though guided by the rein,  
    Are all around fast falling ;  
And their fierce foemen now are closing  
Thick in upon them, and opposing,  
    Their ranks now past recalling.  
The marsh has stopped their march indeed  
    There can be no denying,  
And many a man and many a steed  
    Dyed darkly now lie dying.  
And all their splendour melts away  
Like dew-drops at the dawn of day.

## XVI.

Like as a vulture when bereft of prey  
Long hovers ere it baffled soars away,  
Stern Claverhouse had waited thus in vain,  
Till now he turns his rampant charger's rein ;  
Shouting, in his rough voice, the loud command,  
"Retreat," unto the remnant of his band



XVII.

And thus the victory is won,  
And many hearts made glad—  
Yet grieving that a Sabbath's sun  
Should see a sight so sad.  
And well they know they have not broke  
The rigour of the Despot's yoke,  
And oft they pause and ponder wearily  
On what must hap ere Scotland can be free.

XVIII.

Loudon ! thy fame shall ne'er be lost,  
Even if it only showed the cost  
Our fathers paid for Liberty,  
That priceless jewel of the free,  
Thus nerving us with effort strong  
To combat Tyranny and Wrong.

AN EPISODE IN THE BATTLE OF  
FUENTES D'HONORE.

1811.

THE horse of the armies, in hostile array,  
Haste to prove their proud prowess in mortal  
affray—  
And the soldiers' fierce oaths that are bandied  
around  
Add a fresh sense of horror to battle's stern  
sound.  
Thus the squadrons are nearing each other,  
when lo !  
An hussar leaves our line and makes straight for  
the foe,  
And stung by his tauntings to furious force,  
Direct at one soldier he urges his horse—  
Who, seeing such frenzy of hate with sore fear,  
Sets spurs to his steed, and swift speeds for the rear,

While the other his charger gives rashly the rein,  
And both gallop recklessly over the plain.

Our men greet their comrade with cheers long  
and loud,

While the French are struck mute as he flies  
through their crowd ;

So the chase is continued far, far, in advance  
Of the glancing of bayonet or glittering of lance ;  
Yet our gallant hussar is in perilous plight,  
The enemy near him—no friends now in sight :  
And to reach his companions perforce he must go  
Through the densely ranged ranks of the furious  
foe—

Who, deeming their victory a certainty, vow  
Though he passed their line once, he will not  
pass it now.

And hard they press on him—escape seems in  
vain,

Though he spur his steed onward with loose  
slackened rein.

But the men of his regiment are anxious to save  
A comrade, though reckless, thus daring and  
brave ;

So, drawing their sabres, swift forward they dash  
And charge on the cowards with crest-cleaving  
crash.

Thus the moment which seemed his sad fate to  
have sealed

A goodly array of our soldiers revealed,  
And amid the mad melée of general strife  
He regained his companions with honour and  
life.

AN EPISODE AFTER THE TAKING OF  
BADAJOZ.

1812.

THE sun, reluctant, rises o'er a field  
Heaped high with corpses, ghastly in their gore,  
Where Horror holds her court and reigns supreme  
Whilst revelling in the scene. A woman wends  
Her weary way, and wildly views the slain,  
Powerless to doubt, yet dreading to be sure  
Of what may prove her loss.

She has a babe  
Clasped firmly to her breast, while at her side,  
Held by the hand, there walks her first-born son.  
Alas! she pauses by a prostrate form,  
Which fascinates her gaze ; then hesitates  
In sore suspense and torture. Till at length,

Raising the fallen man, she marks the face.  
It is her husband's features ! Then a wail  
Of awful anguish rends the silent air,  
And, sinking on her knees upon the sward,  
She is convulsed in speechless agony.  
Thus moments pass, until the child who clings  
Close to the woman's raiment lifts his head,  
And softly murmurs, "Mother !" Then when sobs  
Appear his sole response, he loudly cries,  
" Oh, mother, speak to me ; do speak to me ;  
Is this my father lying thus so still ?  
I'll wake him for you." Seizing the cold hand,  
He seeks to raise it, but, with awe-struck fear,  
He looses swift his hold. " 'Tis icy cold,  
Its weight like lead."

Then suddenly she starts,  
And in despairing accents thus exclaims—  
" My God, my heart will burst ! I cannot cry ;  
My brain is burning, yet my heart seems hard.  
I used to grieve when I displeased him ; now,  
When he is gone, I cannot shed a tear !  
Oh, my poor children, what will come of you,  
Left in this weary wilderness of woe,  
Lonely and friendless in a foreign land !"

## DEVOTION OF PRINCE PONIATOWSKI.

LEIPSIC, 1813.

BRAVELY the French have fought, but all by  
treachery is lost,

And nought is left save to retreat, though now  
at fearful cost ;

In gloomy tones Napoleon gives the unfamiliar  
word—

With curses on the enemy it everywhere is heard ;

“And you, Prince Poniatowski, keep the Southern  
Faubourg, while

Across the Pleisse and Elster the vanguard can  
defile.”

“My men are few, your Majesty ; they must in  
time give way.”

“Still you will surely strive to hold the post as  
best you may.”

“Doubt us not, sire, we’ll keep good guard,”  
speaks he with a deep sigh.

“None of my Polish legion but for you would  
gladly die.”

The morning light soon growing bright, shows  
clearly to the foe

The French retreat has now commenced, though  
sad and strangely slow ;

And columns of the Allies advance to do their  
duty

By dashing on to devastate a scene once filled  
with beauty ;

But gallantly their rushing ranks the brave rear-  
guard restrain,

Full long their valiant charge is vain an entrance  
to obtain,

And when, but step by step, the bold defenders  
are retiring,

’Tis whilst resisting steadfastly with still con-  
tinued firing ;

All their companions now have crossed a broad  
bridge which is mined—



If they can pass securely o'er, they soon may  
safety find.

Hark to the sudden hellish crash ! these heroes'  
hope has gone !

The mine has prematurely burst—the careless  
stream rolls on ;

The people fire from off the roofs, the foe press  
on the rear,

A moment 'tis of agony, of overwhelming fear.

Proud Poniatowski sees the flash of hostile sabres  
rise,

And to his Polish cuirassiers, he petulantly  
cries—

“'Tis best to fall with honour now while each  
his weapon plies.”

Turning his horse, he shapes his course 'mong  
bayonets all opposing,

Around his stalwart martial form the enemy are  
closing—

One shot has smote him in the arm, another  
midst his dress,

Striking the gay insignia which his great renown  
express.

He plunges madly through the Pleisse, the  
strength at his command

Is perfectly exhausted ere he feebly gains the  
land ;

Alas ! 'tis but to mark the foe thronging the  
Elster's shore,

And leaping swift into its tide, he sinks to rise  
no more.

Farewell, lost Poland's noble son ! how meet  
the day would be

Whereon the land which gave thee birth once  
more was rendered free.

## ADMIRAL HOPSON'S FIRST EXPLOIT.\*

THE dawning light  
Hath banished Night,  
And Ocean lieth calm—  
Yet all around  
Is heard the sound  
Of war and wild alarm.

The Dutch and we  
Are met at sea  
On this sweet summer day;  
At direful length  
To try our strength  
In battle's bloody fray.

\* Vide *Sea Fights*, page 73.

See ! on the right  
 Two ships in fight  
 Are struggling long and hard ;  
 And though so near,  
 They know not fear,  
 Close grappling yard to yard.

With eager joy  
 An orphan boy  
 Speaks mid the battle's roar—  
 " Since morning's sun  
 The fight has run,—  
 Oh, when will it be o'er ? "

It will not lag  
 Until his flag  
 The foe at last pulls down ;  
 Along our line  
 'Tis held a sign  
 Of conquest and renown.

" If thus it be,  
 Then swift," quoth he  
 With brightly flashing eye ;

“ ’Twill soon be past,  
Nor longer last,  
Though if I fail, I die.”

Hid by the cloak  
Of sable smoke,  
Full noiselessly he goes ;  
Nor does he wait,  
But springs elate  
Among our fiercest foes.

And up their mast  
He clammers fast  
And gains his precious prize ;  
Then from aloft  
He glides down soft,  
In glad and gallant guise.

And through the roar  
He bounds once more  
To his appointed place ;  
Calmly serene  
Was now his mien,  
And noble looked his face.

Our men with glee  
Shout "Victory!"  
Waving the standard gay;  
And from each gun  
The Dutchmen run  
In wonder and dismay.

And while their chief  
Seeks, wild with grief,  
To rally them in vain,  
Our sailors board  
With one accord,  
And soon the vessel gain.

And of the youth  
Who thus, in truth,  
Had won a worthy name,  
Men spoke aloud  
In accents proud,  
And world-wide was his fame.

## DEATH OF CAPTAIN HUNT.\*

JAN. 8TH, 1761.

THE bold crew of the *Unicorn* discern at dawn  
of light,  
Their longing is fulfilled at length—they see the  
foe in sight.  
Full swiftly now the order comes with speed to  
give them chase,  
Their captain knows the French are lost if they  
can gain the race.

Hurrah! the dastard's flight is vain, the vessels  
drawing nigh,  
Each man with eager hope prepares to vanquish  
or to die.

\* See *Battles of the British Navy*, vol. i., p. 210

And soon the cannons' ruthless roar is rolling  
all around,

For two fierce hours with fiendish hate is heard  
its hellish sound ;

Strange scene of wild delirious joy, yet desolating  
woe,

For now a shot the captain strikes, and he is  
borne below.

Two seamen bear him softly down, and bleeding  
sore he lies,

While carefully to bind his wound the skilful  
surgeon tries.

The strife ne'er stays—the bearers bring another  
blood-stained man.

“ Surgeon,” at once the captain speaks, “ go,  
save him if you can.

My wound is mortal ; thus for me your efforts  
kind are vain ;

Not so with him ; then use your power to miti-  
gate his pain.

Nay, murmur not, but meetly now obey my  
last behest ;

God soon shall soothe my sufferings where ‘ the  
weary are at rest.’ ”



Alas! how soon the span of life which to him  
still remained  
Stole swift away; yet ah! 'twas well he con-  
sciousness retained,  
For in a while his heart grew glad—his men had  
won the day—  
His grandest earthly guerdon—ere his spirit  
sped away.  
Hero! as filled with thoughtful love, as thou  
wert true and brave,  
Receive in heaven thy rich reward from Him  
who died to save.

## DUTY STRONGER THAN PAIN.\*

1795.

THE good ship *Rose* with thirteen men and but  
eight guns is steering  
Along the gay Italian coast, in quest of privateering,  
When at the breaking of the day before upon  
the lee  
What gallantly her crew have sought at last  
they gladly see.  
Three armed feluccas are in view, and soon begins  
the fight,  
And the ruthless *Rose* her broadside fires with  
overwhelming might,  
For valiantly her noble crew with vigour ply  
each gun,  
When suddenly a shot lays low of their small  
number, one ;

\* See *Battles of the British Navy*, vol. i., p. 424.

His foot is crushed, and eager hands would bear  
him from the deck,

But with a voice which falters not he seeks their  
care to check—

“I shall not leave you, comrades bold,” heroically  
he cries,

“For I can use a musket still, although I cannot  
rise ;

Then to your posts, nor think of me, our num-  
bers are too few

To spare even one, and readily my duty I can do.”

The battle rages bravely on, and soon 'tis clear  
to see

That gallantly our doughty men have gained  
the victory—

And was it aught of wonder that so it should be  
when

Such fearless hearts impelled the hands of our  
staunch sailors then ?

God grant that if once more our tars should fight  
upon the wave,

They may be then as free from fear, as generous,  
and as brave.

## A SEA ENCOUNTER.

1758.

THE gallant ships *Southampton* and *Melampe*  
brave the gale

In noble guise, as mutually they forth together  
sail,

With massive mast bent to the blast, and canvas  
full and free,

A stirring sight they seem—befitting well an  
English sea—

With many blithesome hearts on board as heed-  
less and as gay

As if Life were merely made for mirth—nought  
save a holiday.

And now, behold, off Yarmouth roads there burst  
upon their sight

Two Gallic frigates in full sail, which they re-  
solve to fight.

The *Melampe* is the swifter barque, and fastest  
gains the foe,  
Who to return her fusillade with interest are not  
slow—  
So ere the crew of the *Southampton* reach the  
strife, they learn  
In a distressed disabled state she has been forced  
astern ;  
Then, like a dastard, one French ship in dread  
doth steer away,  
But madly the *Southampton's* guns upon the  
other play  
Like monsters of destruction, who cannot brook  
delay.

The French engage with reckless rage—the fight  
grows hour by hour,  
Each vessel's crew, with purpose true, striving  
with passion's power ;  
Each seaman seeking still to keep the honour of  
his nation  
By carrying mid the hostile ranks dire woe and  
desolation ;

And the hissing roar of rushing shell and the  
blinding red-hot hail,

All demonstrate what dreadful force they now  
use to prevail.

Hour after hour thus passes swift in unremitting  
strife,

And of the French full eighty men have yielded  
up their life—

But as the sixth hour draweth on they suddenly  
give way,

Their falling flag proclaiming wide that they  
have lost the day.

We trust such times as these shall ne'er again  
mar Britain's story,

Yet bravery, howe'er displayed, shall aye retain  
its glory.

## THE KEEPING OF THE VOW.\*

1330.

KING ROBERT BRUCE is dying, uncertain comes  
his breath,  
And the last strife for failing life will soon be  
won by death ;  
Around his couch the courtiers stand, and heave  
full many a sigh,  
In dire dismay and grief are they to see their  
monarch die.

“ Sir James of Douglas, come ! ” he cries, “ thou  
ever wert my friend,  
And though we part, 'tis well thou art with me  
unto the end.

\* When I versified this incident, I was not aware that the subject had been already dealt with under the title of “ The Heart of the Bruce ” by Professor Aytoun, or I should not have challenged an unenviable comparison.

When in great straits, I vowed to God if He  
    would grant to me  
That War should cease in perfect peace, and  
    Scotland should be free,  
His blessed banner I would bear to sacred  
    Palestine,  
With arms to quell the Infidel : such my supreme  
    design.  
And grieved am I that here I lie, life ebbing fast  
    away,  
This gnawing pain now proving vain the hope  
    my vow to pay.  
Then promise me right faithfully, when I am  
    laid at rest,  
That with my heart thou wilt depart to do my  
    last behest ! ”  
“ I pledge my knightly word, my liege, thy  
    bidding shall be done,  
And though so sad, yet am I glad such favour to  
    have won !  
Safe in my bosom shall thy trust abide with me  
    for ever,  
Unless perchance in peril's hour 'twere best that  
    we should sever.”



The king smiles faintly in reply—then gently  
falls his head,  
And on his grand old follower's breast bold  
Robert Bruce lies dead.

With pennons gay and proud array doth Douglas  
then depart,  
And in a casket carefully he keeps the kingly Heart.  
Crossing the main and sighting Spain, he hears  
of that wild war  
Which Moor and Christian long have waged with  
ceaseless conflict sore ;  
Forthwith he deems that here it seems his mission  
first should be,  
And with his host soon swells the boast of  
Spanish chivalry.  
The armies twain on Tebas'\* plain extend—a  
splendid sight !  
In armour dight with weapons bright, impatient  
for the fight ;  
The summer sunbeams on the shields of warriors  
brave are glancing,

\* On the borders of Andalusia.

And o'er the plain spurs many a man with  
charger proudly prancing,  
Whose gallant crest, stirred by the breeze, full  
gaily now is dancing,  
While each Moslem there with scimitar, upon  
his Arab horse,  
Moves with a calm courageous mien, unswerving  
in his course :  
And thus at length the stately strength the  
Cross and Crescent wield,  
As deadly foes now darkly close upon this fatal  
field.  
The Spaniards' stroke hath bravely broke the  
dense opposing line !  
Yet none the less both armies press around their  
standard-sign,  
And though many a Paynim late so proud lies  
lifeless on the plain,  
While good Castilian jennet's seen unguided by  
the rein.  
First in the van the Douglas rides, with all his  
men-at-arms,—  
A valiant company they are, inured to war's  
alarms,

The veterans of a hundred fields, for whom it  
had its charms,—  
With spur and rein they onward strain on the  
retreating foe,  
And in the chase can scarcely trace the road by  
which they go,  
Till, looking back upon their track, with horror  
now they see  
The ranks opposed once more have closed—they  
are in jeopardy!  
“We find full late the danger great,” Sir Douglas  
cries. “Return!  
And charge the foe like Scots who know the  
rout at Bannockburn;  
Surely the men who vanquished then vain  
Edward’s vast array  
No caitiff Moor can e’er o’ercome on this vic-  
torious day!”  
Thus speaking, swift he turns his steed, and  
gallops to the rear,  
Mid battle’s tide his dauntless ride as gallant  
doth appear,  
As the swimmer’s strife who strives for life, yet  
feels no craven fear,

And as they passed the blows fell fast : stern was  
the conflict wild,  
With steeds and men, who ne'er again would  
rise, the field was piled.  
Yet Douglas true, with still a few, have almost  
cut their way  
With wondrous force—resistless—straight through  
the grim array,  
When glancing quickly round, he sees, still struggling in the fight,  
The noble Walter St. Clair, a very valiant knight.  
They oft were nigh in days gone by, on many a bloody field,  
And oft had they in tourney gay their chargers  
swiftly wheeled,—  
“Ride to the rescue!” Douglas shouts, “dash on and do not spare,  
To save yon matchless comrade which man of you will not dare !”  
Urging his horse with headlong force, he rushes to his aid,  
And many a tunic's fold is cleft by his resistless blade ;

Yet he is left of friends bereft—fierce foemen all  
around,

And mid the roar of mortal strife of succour not  
a sound.

Now snatches he the jewelled casque in which  
the Heart reposes

('Twas strange to see how lovingly his hand  
upon it closes),

And flings it forward 'mong the foe around him,  
with the cry,

“Press on, brave Heart, as thou wert wont: I  
follow thee or die!”

With lifted lance he makes advance to where  
his treasure fell,

Each crash of blow—now fast, now slow—like  
a rude requiem knell,

And left alone, yet ne'er o'erthrown, he grapples  
with the foe,

Until a sword-thrust piercing him at last doth  
lay him low ;

Then gallantly he fights a while, half kneeling  
on the plain,

And there, exhausted by his wounds, he finally  
is slain.

So died this grand old hero! In Douglas kirk  
    he sleeps,  
While History the record proud of his achieve-  
    ments keeps.

# SONNETS.





AT THE GRAVE OF DANTE  
GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

9TH APRIL, 1883.

THERE is a tomb, all monumentless yet  
Hard by a moss-grown church's Gothic door,  
Within the hearing of the ocean's roar,  
Where lies a man the world can scarce forget :—  
And here the world's extremes are surely met,  
For round about him are the tombs of those  
Who led long lives obscure until their close,  
And when their days were done their suns were  
set.

Wild thyme and violets grow upon his grave,  
Summer's fair heralds ; and a stranger now  
Visits with reverence his resting-place,  
A harbinger of many who will crave  
On each sad anniversary to avow  
True love's regret that ne'er they saw  
his face.

## AN AUTUMN REMINISCENCE.\*

A RADIANT garden rises in my view  
Replete with loveliness ; there sunrays fall  
Softly through boughs of eld ; a brooklet's  
brawl  
Rumbles o'er pebbly beds of grey and blue,  
And deftly carved in calm they never knew  
Heroes of old the green slopes keep in thrall—  
Whereon grow lilies, and proud dahlias tall,  
And shapely ferns, and flowers of varied hue.

Small wonder that these storied warrior forms  
Should now in sculptured stone have peace :  
when I,  
Oft battling in the surge of Life's loud sea,  
Find here surcease of all tempestuous storms—  
Where still and silent 'neath a placid sky  
All nature in repose lies tranquilly.

\* Reprinted from the *Academy*.







